

*Paris herself
again!*

hibition will by its attrac-
ly shorten the holiday of
to spend the rest of their
nearer home. Nor is this
at when it is remembered
e World's Show, amongst
and admirable exhibits,
d ingenuity have more
own; and that whether
factory products of the
d, or the vastly improved
mother country be taken
d is fairly entitled to the
st the nations who display
rench capital. In this way
or some time at least, will
in the artistically designed
Exhibition, will in all pro-
mainder of the holiday they
their own country, instead of
itious throngs farther afield.
ce will explore the beautiful
them birth; while others
ortness of purse, will find
wander beyond the sea. Yet
opportunities of huge enjoy-
the tourist may find it
to rest in the pleasant
and and bask in the sun
er lovely lakes, or de-
sack on his back, and with-
out stick as his friends, seek
the beautiful valley of the
lovely champaign which,
st and Sevenoaks, leads the
all that inimitable country
the delicious villas of Tun-
h of delight may readily be-
cally the loveliest of lands
ce is almost unbounded; so
m and enterprise combined
country within his reach. He
giving breezes of Scarbo-
Margate, and Westgate, or
he under the shelter of the
between Ventnor and Black-
ast, which boasts such varied
over, Folkestone, Brighton,
outhsea respectively afford, is
he has but to choose. Or if
ous scenery, North Wales,
yhead, is open to him, with
of Conway and Carnarvon,
t scenery of the Llanberis
too, he may, if he desire
Llandudno sea resorts of no
ith the glorious food which
ries and farmyards. Or he
hire, and at Dawlish, Teign-
uth take his ease, and drink
one of the West. Should he

city which has been represented by such men
as a Sir William Molesworth, a Layard, and a
Locke is left to seek its champions of Liberalism
in the ranks of respectable local tradesmen, de-
voted to Permissive-Billism, Disestablishment,
pro-Russianism, and every other craze and
crotchet that will most readily scare off sound
Liberals into the Conservative ranks. In the
City this species of dictation has less chance of
success, and Mr. Goschen has only to announce
his determination to offer himself on his own
merits to insure its entire defeat.

It is understood that the Government have
now under consideration the tenders which have
been sent in conformably with a notice recently
issued for the mail service to China and India.
Hitherto the contract has been in the hands of
the Peninsular and Oriental Company, but the
subsisting arrangement expires in eighteen
months, and in the new contract certain im-
provements are contemplated, mainly on such
points as increased speed, and reduced cost, of
conveyance. On a matter of such importance
the Treasury officials will doubtless exercise the
greatest care and circumspection. The mercan-
tile and social interests involved, though weighty
enough, are comparatively insignificant beside
the political bearings of the question, for since
the complete collapse of those whom, for want of
a better term, we may designate the "Perish
India" fanatics, the significance of constant,
rapid and secure means of intercourse between
England and the Oriental half of her Empire has
immeasurably increased under the press of mo-
mentous responsibilities, deliberately under-
taken. It is satisfactory to believe that this is
thoroughly comprehended by the Government,
and that in deciding as to the new contract they
will be swayed by public considerations only.
We hope it may be taken for granted that
they will, at all events, not venture upon any
experimental modes of dealing with the service.
The Company which has hitherto held the con-
tract can point to a long and most successful
career, during which it has carried the mails
with a regularity which, under all the circum-
stances, and making every conceivable allow-
ance, is really wonderful. A new comer, en-
tering on the field without the same experi-
ence, accumulated resources, and thoroughly
ramified organisation, could not be expected to
accomplish as much, whatever it might under-
take, and in this case public interests would
suffer. It is natural that the leaders of the
mercantile world, whose appreciation of the
subject takes a wider scope than the welfare of
rival shipowners, should deprecate any arrange-
ment which might have such a result, and thus
we learn, without surprise, that they have already
stirred in the matter. One of the most remark-
able "round robins" perhaps ever witnessed in
the City, signed by every firm and bank of emi-
nence connected with the East, beginning with
Messrs. Rothschild, and bearing such names as
Sassoon, Hambro, Matheson, Ralli, and Dent,
has been presented to the Postmaster-General on
the subject of the new contract. The memo-

PARIS AFTER THE PE

THE CITY WITHOUT CA

[FROM OUR SPECIAL CORRESPOND

PARIS.

Arriving at seven in the morning
weary, at the Paris terminus of the C
Fer du Nord, we cooled our heels di
ordinary and intolerable half-hour,
driven by superior order from one *sa*
to another, until it pleased the *da*
begin the usual farcical but irritating
tion of the passengers' luggage. This
ance was not by any means the less
cause it was a farce and a sham. T
very few things worth smuggling no
smugglers are careful to put their co
goods anywhere but in the boxes and
teaus which they know will be search
supposing that it were worth while to
custom-house officers, modern French
happen to be a singularly unbribable
they do not receive fees, they consid
selves to be absolved from the necessit
civil, so that everything goes as m
well, as the Inchcape Bell in a fog.

Dismissed from the unsatisfactory p
a fiscal organisation with nothing t
doing it most elaborately, and emergi
courtyard of the terminus, I found, t
nishment, that nearly the only vehicles
area were a line of those well-remembe
boxes on wheels, with seats *vis-à-vis*, v
to have started in life with the in
becoming omnibuses, but, thinking be
have halted in a truncated conditio
shandrydans are drawn by a pair of s
seemingly reared for the purpose o
mats and broken Eau de Selz syphons
senting in their osteological developm
worthy the attention of a Gamgee o
Sidney. The vehicles themselves are
called "paniers à salade," from
manner in which while in mo
shake-up the "passengers'" bones. Th
these wretched carriages are, as a rule,
to Parisian legends, either wealthy n
Normandy, who have come up to the
in quest of the graceless nephews to v
intend to leave their fortunes, o
lunatics who are met at the station
tendants of the asylums to which the
consigned. The railway porters were
place my baggage on the roof of or
rickety palanquins on wheels, whe
observed that I should prefer a c
voiture!" cried one of the porters,
distending to the broadest of grins, "a
by which colloquialism he gave me

One gentleman, in a red waistcoat and a hat covered with white oilskin, cursed me so heartily and so copiously when I asked him to drive me from the Rue Vivienne to the Rue de Labruyère, that I almost fancied that he must be our famous "Ben, the Hackney coachman bold," come to life again, and metamorphosed into a vituperative Gaul. You will remember the bold Ben, of whom it is sung in the touching ballad of "Tamaroo": "How he'd swear and how he'd drive, number Three Hundred and Sixty-five, with his high fol liddle, iddle, high gee woa." The man with the red waistcoat and the white hat swore at me, but declined to drive me. I gave him as good as he had given, and toiled along the broiling boulevard, remote, unfriended, melancholy, and slow, remembering a certain morning seven and twenty years ago, when, as happened yesterday, there were no cabs to be had for love or for money in Paris. Stay! If you were a Republican Deputy, M. de Maupas, Prefect of Police, had placed a limited number of private hackney carriages at the disposal of the Representatives of the Extreme Left, who were conveyed, free, gratis and for nothing, to Mazas, to the Conciergerie, or to La Roquette. That was on the 2nd of December, 1851. In the Exhibition year, 1867, things were bad enough in the cab way, and there was a partial, but not a general strike. I don't think, however, that I ever paid more than three times the proper fare; and not more than twice, on inquiring of a Jehu how much I was to pay him, did the gentleman on the box raise his whip and "offer" to strike me across the face. In the year last mentioned, M. Pietri, then Prefect of Police, caused it to be intimated to the *cochers* that if they did not immediately resume work and keep civil tongues in their heads their licences would be forfeited *en masse*, and their places supplied by gunners and drivers from the artillery. Such high-handed measures are perhaps impracticable under a Republican *régime*, although M. Albert Gigot, the existing *gédile*, is prepared, I hear, "to act with energy should circumstances demand it." Circumstances, I should say, demand that something should be done at once. The Company and the cabmen are losing, as it is, at least a thousand pounds a day in fares to the Exhibition and back again, to say nothing of the ordinary *courses*; and the disgusted public are beginning to patronise all kinds of abnormal vehicles—*wagonnettes*, *char-à-bancs*, *tapissières*, vans, and carts of every description, the drivers of which charge only 75 centimes from the central boulevards to the Champ de Mars. There is a railway to the Exhibition, but the route is a roundabout one, and an unconscionable time is occupied in getting

FIGHTING ON THE BOSNA. DEFEAT OF THE INSURGENTS.

[BY DAILY TELEGRAPH SPECIAL WIRE.]
[FROM OUR OWN CORRESPONDENT.]

VIENNA, THURSDAY NIGHT.

More fighting has taken place in Bosnia, though, according to the Austrian official account, it has been attended with very small loss. The following report, received at the War Office, from Maglaj, headquarters, of the 13th Army Corps, bears Tuesday's date, and must consequently have been somewhat delayed in transmission: "The main column began to march towards Maglaj yesterday at eight a.m., the rain coming down in torrents. The flank columns received orders to advance at five o'clock, so that they might reach Maglaj at the same time. The march was very fatiguing, the road being soaked, and the men having to walk ankle deep in mud and water. To the north of Moserac a few shots were fired from the hill on the left, which, being thickly wooded, could not be attacked. At half-past three in the afternoon the advanced guard arrived before Maglaj. Lieutenant Pittel, commanding the left flying column, in accordance with his instructions, and with the object of surrounding the place, had arrived earlier, and had thrown a few shells in the midst of the insurgent camp on the left bank of the Bosna, where they caused considerable commotion. When, later on, the insurgents attempted to retreat in the direction of Zepce they were attacked in rear and flank by the right flying column under Colonel Kinnart. A half-hour's combat ensued, in which two flags, a large quantity of arms, ammunition, and provisions were captured. Many of the insurgents were shot down by our gun and rifle fire, and were found dead inside the houses. A detachment of 20 men was driven into the Bosna, where they were all drowned. It was now late in the evening, and the troops were well nigh exhausted. The state of the road precluded all idea of a further advance, and Marshal Philippovic would not send the cavalry alone through the defile of Zepce. The attitude of the troops under fire was excellent." Here follows a special mention of the discipline and courage displayed by certain regiments. "The 7th Reserve lost one killed and three wounded, and the 47th Reserve one killed and seven wounded. The fatigue of the troops from heavy marching, their indifferent condition, brought on by bivouacking in the wet, and the forced unpunctuality of the provision train, which owing to the bad roads was only expected at

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GEORGE WILLIAMS
COLLEGE
LIBRARY



Gift of

Duane Robinson



PARIS HERSELF AGAIN

PARIS HERSELF AGAIN

by

GEORGE AUGUSTUS SALA

ILLUSTRATED WITH ORIGINAL
LITHOGRAPHS BY
VICTOR ROSS



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*First published as a series of despatches
in the "Daily Telegraph," 1878-79*

* * *

*Reprinted in two volumes illustrated by
contemporary French Artists, 1880*

* * *

*First Impression in the Golden Galley
presentation, with new lithographs by
Victor Ross, 1948*

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FOREWORD



IF the phrase had been current in his time George Augustus Henry Sala would doubtless have been known as a "Colourful Personality." He was an egoist of industry and ingenuity; he was a little of a romantic, more than a little of a gourmet; he was cosmopolitan and bilingual, versatile and inventive; something more than a dilettante of the creative and critical arts. Above all, he was a journalist; and, as such, perhaps the originator of the personal, egoistic, didactic, "columnist" style which has grown increasingly popular in the half-century since his death.

Sala was born in New Street, Manchester Square, London, on the 24th November 1828, the youngest child of Augustus John James Sala (1792-1828). His grandfather—Claudio Sebastiani Sala—was an Italian who came to England about 1776 to assist Sir John Gallini in the production of ballets at the King's and Haymarket Theatres. His mother—Henrietta Catherina Florentina Simon (1789-1860)—was the daughter of a wealthy Demerara planter who, having sent her to England to be educated, seems conveniently to have washed his hands of her. She had, fortunately for the young family which she produced, a good voice, and in 1827 made her first public appearance at Covent Garden Theatre as Countess Almaviva in Bishop's version of Mozart's *Marriage of Figaro*. Following the early death of her husband, she mainly supported herself and her five children by teaching, singing, and giving annual concerts, in London and Brighton. Sometimes, too, she ventured into the "legitimate" theatre. In 1836-37, for instance, she was invaluable to Braham in his season at the St. James's Theatre.

George Augustus, his three brothers and sister thus grew up in what was then called a "Bohemian" atmosphere. Their mother, who seems to have been a kind, and lovable, if somewhat improvident creature, was fortunate in the friendship and patronage of many wealthy and influential people. Though she was often hard put to it to make ends meet, they generally *did* meet. Though she might be weeping bitterly (with young George) in a dingy Paris *pension* one day, she was, the next day, happily spanking along the Calais road in an expensive *berline-de-voyage*, on the way to Brighton, and another Benefit Season.

Henrietta Sala, one feels, was one of those engaging and attractive characters who are more common in fiction than in fact: pretty, but not practical; clever, but not cunning; artistic, and artless; loving, and lovable. Such women were the heroines of the long series of "happy family" plays and films which drew the escapist crowds in post-Munich, pre-war Britain. Such women, when they do occur in the drab, non-fictional, workaday world, often display the most noble fortitude under adversity. Mrs. Sala certainly did. She died in her beloved Brighton, at the age of 71, and—like so many of her spiritual and professional successors—was duly borne to Kensal Green in April, 1860.

The youthful George Augustus early showed his bent. Having learned French from his mother, he wrote a French tragedy called *Fredegonde* before he was ten. A couple of years later he produced a lurid, 12,000 word penny-dreadful called *Gerald Moreland; or, the Forged Will*, completed, as he wrote, "on Teusday, March 22nd, A.D. 1842." Meanwhile, too, he was turning his attention to the representational

arts. A sketch of his sister "Gussy" is entitled *Portrait of a Lady!!!! The resemblance left entirely to imagination!!* (His exclamation marks). It was this aptitude with the pencil, rather than the somewhat inflamed productions of his pen, which impressed his mother. (It is, of course, a commonplace among non-writers that "anybody can write." Drawing is "different." Drawing is "difficult." People who can draw have, obviously, "got something"). So, when George Augustus had finished his schooling in Paris, his mother sent him, at the age of 14, to the studio of Carl Schiller, a miniature-painter in Charlotte Street, Fitzroy Square. This led, in 1845, to a draughtsman's job, drawing plans for the railways which were then beginning to spread, like a rash, all over the country. From this, in turn, he progressed to scene-painting at the Princess's and Lyceum Theatres, to book illustration, to etching, engraving and lithographing. He became friendly with the famous George Cruikshank, and with Hablot K. Browne ("Phiz"). In 1850 his first book was published, by Ackermann. It was a comic, illustrated guide-book for continental tourists, entitled *Practical Exposition of J. M. W. Turner's Picture: Hail, Rain, Steam and Speed*.

In 1851 Sala began what was to be a fairly long association with Charles Dickens, who that year accepted from him a contribution to *Household Words* called *The Key of the Street*. Thenceforth, until 1856, he contributed to that publication every week. Thus he was launched, and soon thoroughly absorbed, in literature or journalism.

Dickens gave Sala his first opportunity as a "special correspondent," the branch of journalism in which he was, later, to become so famous. At the end of the Crimean War, in April 1856, he went to Russia to write descriptive articles for *Household Words*, and remained there until September of the same year. Then Dickens' refusal to permit him to re-publish the articles in volume form caused a brief estrangement between the two men. They were reconciled in 1858, however, and Sala resumed his contributions to *Household Words*. The articles on Russia were re-published as a book entitled *A Journey Due North*. In the same year Dickens brought out his magazine *All the Year Round*, to which

Sala was also a regular contributor, and from which, as from *Household Words*, all his papers were subsequently re-issued as books.

Meanwhile his literary scope was broadening, and his output was steadily increasing. He produced novels, "social sketches" (to-day we should call them gossip features), and such "bright" columns as *Echoes of the Week*. The latter, by the way, Sala himself parodied in *Punch* under the title *Egos of the Week*. He produced critical essays and monographs; he established, and was the first editor of the magazine *Temple Bar*.

In 1857 he was invited by Joseph Moses Levy, then proprietor of the *Daily Telegraph*, to contribute to that newspaper. For nearly 25 years from that date he wrote two articles for the *Telegraph* every day except Saturdays. From November, 1863, to December 1864, he reported the progress of the American Civil War, being a correspondent in the field. This assignment was succeeded by a long series of foreign tours and "special correspondence," which became a highly popular feature of the newspaper. In 1866-67 he was in North Italy, with Garibaldi's army. In 1870 he wrote, from Paris, of the beginnings of the Franco-German war. In August of that year he was arrested by the Paris police, after a flying visit to Metz, as a spy. Nevertheless he was in Rome on the 20th September when the Italian troops ended papal rule there.

Paris Herself Again was first published as a series of daily despatches in the *Daily Telegraph* in 1878-79. It was re-issued, in two volumes, with illustrations by many well-known contemporary French artists, in 1880. This new edition is the first in what, it is hoped, will be a long series of *Golden Galley re-presented* reprints. A clumsy phrase, that; but I can think of none better to describe our technique, devised by Powell Perry, of presenting old favourites in new clothes. Thus, we have commissioned Victor Ross to give George Augustus a brand new outfit of pictures. These are reproduced by the lithographic process, and were drawn directly on the plate, which is how, I believe, Sala would have liked them to be drawn. Thus, too, this book is of an unusually large size (very unpopular with booksellers, and librarians; it won't fit their shelves!) to display the lithographs to

better advantage. And, thus, I have taken fairly considerable liberties with the author. His many chapters dealing with the show-pieces of the Paris Exhibition have, of course, been deleted. I have, too, removed or pruned some of his more verbose extravaganzas on certain aspects of life in the Capital of the Third Empire. His punctuation, spelling and confused tactics with italics, however, have not been changed more than was necessary for the sake of clarity.

When Sala was writing these papers, five years had passed since the ending of the German occupation of Paris. Of the many journalists who witnessed her liberation from the longer occupation of 1940-44, is there one, I wonder, who—in 1949 or 1950—will be able to show us, as Sala showed his readers, that she is “herself again”?

What of Sala’s literary style? On this the *Dictionary of National Biography* is instructive. “The facility with which he drew upon his varied stores of half-digested knowledge (writes the *D.N.B.*), the self-confidence with which he approached every manner of topic, the egotism and the bombastic circumlocutions which rapid production encouraged in him, hit the taste of a large section of the public . . . At the same time the tawdry style of writing with which he

impregnated the *Daily Telegraph* excited ridicule which tormented him. The *Saturday Review* denounced it for many years as turgid and inflated.”

These are harsh verdicts. But, if one judges according to the accepted canons of the best literary style, they are just. Already in Sala’s time, however, the exigencies of the practice of journalism were inimical to the production of beautiful, polished prose. Rapid and voluminous output, on the one hand, and fine writing, on the other, are uneasy bedfellows. Even in the ’seventies of the last century—and how much more so to-day!—the former meant fame and wealth for the journalist. The latter achieved, at best, a *succès d’estime*. Fame and wealth, one observes, are popular and desirable. So style went overboard.

There is, of course, as much difference between Sala’s “turgid and inflated” prose, and the slick, staccato, wise-crackings of the latter-day Grub Street hack, as there is between the Paris of the ’eighties, and the Paris of to-day. But who will say that the one is, intrinsically, better than the other?

Sala died, like his mother, in the Brighton which he, too, loved on 8th December 1895.

ERNEST GALLEY



PREFACE



went to Paris at the end of the first week in July, last year, intending to remain a fortnight in the French capital; and I returned from Paris to London on the twenty-third of November, on the eve of my birthday: when I was fifty years of age. I have rarely enjoyed myself so thoroughly and so heartily; and I am sure that I have not, these many years past, suffered so much physical discomfort as I did during nearly five months' residence in Paris. I must frankly own that no inconsidered proportion of the lack of comfort which I experienced in Paris was altogether of my own choosing. There are many new, spacious, clean, and airy hotels in Paris; and I could have obtained, at no very extortionate rates, comfortable and luxurious apartments at the Grand or at the Louvre, at the Continental or at the Splendide, at the Chatham or at the Lille et Albion. All the hotels in the fashionable quarters, from the Rue de Rivoli to high up in the Champs Elysées, and from the Rue de la Chaussée d'Anton along the Boulevards to the Madeleine, were thronged to repletion with English people. Now it happened that I had at the time a number of very good reasons for avoiding my countrymen. As a rule, I find them

when travelling on the Continent intensely disagreeable. I know that I am; and surely there is room in the world enough for us both. It is my fortune, or my misfortune, to know intimately or slightly a vast number of people in all ranks and conditions of life; and I had no wish to hear on the Boulevard des Capucines the same interminable chatter on the Eastern Question—with the Eastern Question!—and the same club, "society," and theatrical stories and scandals which I had been hearing since the beginning of the London season in Pall Mall and in Fleet Street—or in Seven Dials and Brick Lane, Spitalfields, if you like. I had no ambition to hear Codrus recite his Thescid at the Grand Hotel, or to meet Smudge, A.R.A., in the Rue de la Paix, and be scowled at by him because I had written some unpalatable things about his picture of "The Maniacal Sunday-school Teacher" in the Exhibition of the Royal Academy. And, finally, I shrank from meeting the people who, I felt sure, would ask me to dinner. Throughout the London season they lie in wait for guests; and when the season is at an end they rush over to Paris, and roam up and down the English-frequented streets for the sole purpose of making captives of their bow and spear, or rather, of their knife and fork invites. I was

in bad health when I went to Paris. I cannot ever be in good health again, and half at least of my days are spent in the acutest physical pain; and every dinner which I cannot have the choosing of myself is so much bodily and mental torture, and another nail in my coffin. And I abhor *tables d'hôte*; holding, as I do, that it is abominable tyranny to be forced to dine with people you certainly would not ask to dine with you. The majority of English people whom you meet at a foreign *table d'hôte* are either sulky or silly. I know that I am both, by turns; and I prefer to dine in my own room or at a restaurant, where I can read as I eat—to the detriment of digestion—quarrel with my food; scold my companion; snarl at the waiter; and feel comfortable. "The pursuit of happiness" is one among the inalienable Rights of Man enumerated in the American Declaration of Independence. Comfort is, mundanely speaking, happiness; and we are entitled to travel towards the bourne of felicity by whichever route we choose to take.

In this nice, sociable, and amiable frame of mind I gave my compatriots in Paris the widest of berths, and sought for a domicile in a neighbourhood thoroughly French. I would have sought one "over the water," in the Rue de Seine or the Rue St. André des Arts; but it was necessary for business purposes that I should have my den close to the Place de la Bourse, where there is an excellent branch of the General Post Office, and close to a cab-stand. Suddenly I bethought me of a house called the Grand Hôtel Beauséjour, on the Boulevard Poissonnière, where, between 1854 and 1862, I had frequently resided. It was more of a *maison meublée* than an hotel. They could give you your morning *café au lait*, and cook some *œufs sur le plat*, or even a cutlet at a pinch; but the people of the house did not care much about supplying set repasts, and rather preferred that you should take your second breakfast and your dinner abroad. It was a very clean, cheerful, and well-kept establishment, and in its management thoroughly French. I found the Beauséjour in July '78 as clean and bright, as cheerful and well kept, as it had been between '54 and '62. Unfortunately, Madame la Patronne—to whom I beg to convey the expression of my distinguished consideration, and for whose atten-

tion and civility I have really reason to be grateful—was suffering from that *trop plein*, or was the rather in the full enjoyment of that plethora of guests which, during the Exhibition time, made business highly profitable to the hotel and lodging-house keepers, and Paris so very uninhabitable. The utmost amount of accommodation which Madame could place at our disposal was a couple of little rabbit-hutch-like rooms on the second floor, above the *entresol*: one to serve as a *salon*, and the other, which contained two little beds of Procrustean proportions, was to do duty as a bedchamber. We paid between four and five guineas a week for these two little dens (which were prettily decorated, but were quite destitute of ventilation); and in them we were alternately stewed, broiled, baked, and half frozen during a wet July, a torrid August, a semi-tropical September, a chill October, and a bitterly bleak November. There was a balcony to our *salon* overlooking the boulevard; and more than once in these volumes the reader will come across doleful complaints of the thundering sound of the omnibuses and *chars-à-bancs*, and the ceaseless roar of a multitude that seemed never to go to bed. We breakfasted on most mornings at the Café Véron, at the corner of the boulevard and the Rue Vivienne; and I shall not readily forget the constant and thoughtful courtesy shown to me by M. Gosselin, the esteemed proprietor of the café in question. It was he who acted as my cicerone when I visited the Halles Centrales; to him I was indebted for a great deal of varied information on all kind of things Parisian; and whenever my wife wanted anything in the way of millinery or dress or "fallals" his wife was always ready to tell her where to go, and how to procure the very best articles at the most moderate prices. When I first entered his establishment and ordered breakfast I was a total stranger to him; but after half a dozen visits we came to be looked upon as regular clients, and the landlord became a genial and considerate friend. And this I hold to be the way of the French. At first sight they may strike you as being greedy for money, even to the verge of rapacity; but as soon as they come to know you they turn out to be not only obliging but really affectionate folks, who will do anything for you.

PREFACE

One word in conclusion, to explain why I made public so ostensibly uninteresting a fact that I was fifty last November. I drew attention to the circumstances as a justification of my presuming to write anything about Paris, and to show that I was to some extent qualified to write about it. I have known the French capital intimately, for forty years. I was taken there to school in August 1839; and there at school I remained until the French language had become as familiar to me as mine own. I was in Paris during the revolution of 1848; during the *coup d'état* of 1851, when I nearly got shot; during the Exhibition years of 1855 and 1867. I was in Paris on the 4th September 1870, when I

nearly got murdered as a "Prussian spy;" and, apart from the journalistic errands which have taken me to Paris, I have lived for months together, in all parts of the city, over and over again. So if I do not know something about Paris now—I do not say that I know much—I shall not, I apprehend, ever know anything touching the city which I have seen "knocked into a cocked hat" over and over again—barri-caded, bombarded, beleaguered, dragooned, and all but sacked, but which is now "Paris Herself Again"—comelier, richer, gayer, more fascinating than ever. And happier? *Que sais-je?* That is no business of mine. I have enough to do, myself, to try to be as little miserable as I can.

46 MECKLENBURG SQUARE, W.C.
September 1879.





THE CITY WITHOUT CABS

Paris, August 7

Arriving at seven in the morning, hungry and weary, at the Paris terminus of the Chemin de Fer du Nord, we cooled our heels during the ordinary and intolerable half-hour, and were driven by superior order from one *salle d'attente* to another, until it pleased the customs' officers to begin the usual farcical but irritating examination of the passengers' luggage. This performance was not by any means the less stupid because it was a farce and a sham. There are very few things worth smuggling nowadays; smugglers are careful to put their contraband goods anywhere but in the boxes and portmanteaus which they know will be opened; and, even if it were worth while to bribe the custom-house officers, modern French *douaniers* are a singularly unbribeable race. They are, in Paris at least, incorruptible, but sulky. As they do not receive fees, they consider themselves to be absolved from the necessity of being civil; so that everything in the *Salle des Bagages*, at seven a.m., goes as merrily as—well, as the Inchcape Bell in a fog.

Dismissed from the unsatisfactory presence of a fiscal organisation with virtually nothing to do, and doing it most elaborately, and emerging into the courtyard of the terminus, I found, to my astonishment, that nearly the only vehicles in the vast area were some half-dozen of those well-remembered square boxes on wheels, with seats *vis-à-vis*, which seem to have started life with the intention of becoming omnibuses, but,

thinking better of it, have halted in a truncated condition. These shandrydans are drawn by a pair of steeds, each seemingly reared for the purpose on old coir-mats and broken Eau de Seltz syphons, and presenting in their osteological development studies worthy the attention of a Gamgee, a Samuel Sidney, or a Walsh. The vehicles themselves are, I believe, called "*paniers à salade*," from the energetic manner in which, while in motion, they shake up the passengers' bones. The patrons of these wretched carriages are, as a rule (according to Parisian legends), either wealthy farmers from Normandy, who have come up to the metropolis in quest of the graceless nephews to whom they intend to leave their fortunes; or harmless lunatics, who are met at the station by the attendants of the asylums to which they are to be consigned. The railway porters were about to place my baggage on the roof of one of these rickety palanquins on wheels, when I mildly observed that I should prefer a cab. "*Une voiture!*" cried one of the porters, his mouth distending to the broadest of grins, "*à Chaillot;*" by which colloquialism he gave me to understand that I was demanding the Impossible. Then both porters hastened to explain that since Monday morning the Paris cabmen had been *en grève*; that the strike would probably be general; that there was a deadly feud between the *Compagnie Générale des Voitures* and their drivers; that the average number of visitors to the Exhibition had been diminished by one-third in consequence of the lack of facilities for locomotion; and that,

altogether, *il y avait du propre*, which was equivalent to an intimation that things vehicular were in a pretty mess.

Although my astonishment had by this time become changed into dismay, I did not wholly give up the battle as lost, or resign myself unreservedly to the bone-bruising *panier à salade*. Exhibiting small silver moneys as an earnest of future bounty, and speaking the worst French at my command, I pointed to an empty four-wheeled cab in the background, and insisted upon having it. In vain it was represented to me that the driver had his blue flag up, signifying that he was *loué*, or engaged. I continued to point, to insist, and to jingle small coins. At length the pleasant conviction may have burst upon the porters that I was *Ultimus Romanorum*, or the last of the *Milords Anglais*. One of them went in quest of the distant cabman, who, after long parley and seemingly receiving unimpeachable guarantees as to my British nationality, was induced to listen to reason. His "machine" was an ancient cab, of the construction formerly known as a "*Dame Blanche*." Its perfume was not that of Araby the Blest, and it was drawn by two half-starved white dobbins; but I entered it with as much alacrity as though it had been the golden coach of a High-Sheriff; and I thought the mile-and-a-half an hour, which seemed to be the utmost

speed which the knock-kneed, shoulder-shotten Rosinantes could attain, a very fair rate of progress indeed.

At the other Paris railway stations, on this self-same Tuesday morning, there were, I was given to understand, no cabs at all; and the passengers from the provinces were landed on the pavement, where they were left sitting on their luggage, and lamenting, like Lord Ullin in the ballad. I am bound to admit that the solitary Automedon, in a glazed hat and a red waistcoat, who plied at the Gare du Nord, did not take an excessive advantage of my helplessness. This worthy son of Dioreus held his hand after charging me not more than double the usual fare; and he left the amount of *Pourboire* to my generosity. We parted mutually satisfied. He called me "*Mon bourgeois*," and I called him "*Mon brave*." I think that he must have been the father of a family. "Yes," he replied, in answer to my inquiries, "there was a strike and a devil of a one." "*Tant pis pour la Compagnie, tant pis pour le public, tant pis pour nous, et tant mieux pour le Mont de Piété.*" He was, it will be obvious, a philosopher, albeit one of the pessimist kind. I should say, myself, that strikes are bad things all round and for everybody, except the pawnbrokers and the publicans. Just now the shops of the *marchands de vins* are crammed with mutinous cabdrivers, and the consumption of *schnick* and *petit bleu* is enormous. If the cab collapse continues the wives of the Jehus on strike will soon be setting about making up bundles full of Lares and Penates to be deposited in the kindly but strict custody of *ma tante*.

Eight long years have elapsed since I trod the boulevards of Paris as a *flâneur*—since I halted before the kiosks to look at the ever-fresh and ever-spiteful political caricatures—since I sipped a *mazagran* or a *Bavaroise* at the Café de la Paix, the Grand, or the Helder. I quitted Paris on a grim September night in 1870 when "the gentlemen of the pavement" were in power, and the Siege was about to begin. What changes have taken place since then! How much blood, how many tears, have been shed! What treasures wasted! What hopes blasted! What pride humbled! What clever combinations, calculations, forecasts, shattered and trampled in the





The demi-monde - Jardin de Mabille



The Haut-Monde - A l'Opéra

dust by a derisive Fate! I left Paris for Lyons that lowering September night, left it a city full of the rumours of war and beleaguering, full of rage and terror, full of doubt and dread; and I have come back to a Paris which, abating the squabble between the cabmen and their employees, seems to be about the most smiling, the most peaceful, and the most prosperous city that I have ever beheld. Whether among the political ashes still live their wonted fires, it is not my purpose just now to inquire.

Only one-fifth of the vehicles ordinarily in circulation were out, it is said, yesterday; and the police inspectors, who generally show so much alacrity in jotting down the little faults of the cabmen, wandered about in a listless manner, with blank note-books and unused pencils. The most irritating part of the affair was that among the few broughams and victorias, which at first sight appeared to be plying for hire, nearly every one proved on nearer inspection to be displaying above the driver's seat the little blue banner, signifying that the carriage was engaged. Not a "Bonny Blue Flag" by any means. To the weary-footed rather an ensign of woe. Sometimes "engaged" was rendered in the masculine, as *loué*, and sometimes in the feminine, as *louée*; but in nearly every case the Amaxelates when hailed shook his head, either courteously, ironically, or defiantly. One gentleman, in a green waistcoat and a hat covered with white oilskin, cursed me so heartily and copiously when I asked him to drive me from the Rue Vivienne to the Rue de Labruyère that I almost fancied that he must be our famous "Ben, the Hackney coachman bold," come to life again, and metamorphosed into a vituperative Gaul. You will remember the bold Ben of whom it is sung in the touching ballad of "Tamaroo:" "How he'd swear and how he'd drive, number Three Hundred and Sixty-five, with his high fol liddle, iddle, high gee woa."

The man with the verdant vest and the white hat swore at me, but declined to drive me. I gave him as good as he had given; and then proceeded to toil along the broiling boulevard, remote, unfriended, and melancholy, and slow, recalling in my mind a certain seven-and-twenty years ago, when, as happened yesterday, there were no cabs to be had for love or money in



Paris. Stay! If you were a Republican Deputy, M. de Maupas, Prefect of Police, had placed a limited number of private hackney carriages at the disposal of the representatives of the Extreme Left, who were conveyed, free, gratis, and for nothing, to Mazas, to the Conciergerie, or to La Roquette. That was on the 2nd of December 1851. In the exhibition year, 1867, things were bad enough in the cab way, and there was a partial, but not a general strike. I don't think, however, that I ever paid more than three times the proper fare; and not more than twice, on inquiring of a Jehu how much I was to pay him, did the gentleman on the box raise his whip and "offer" to strike me across the face. In the year last mentioned, M. Pietri, then Prefect of Police, caused it to be intimated to the *cochers* that, if they did not immediately resume work, and keep civil tongues in their heads, their licences would be forfeited *en masse*, and the places supplied by gunners and drivers from the artillery.

Such high-handed measures are perhaps impracticable under a Republican régime, although M. Albert Gigot, the existing ædile, is prepared, I hear, "to act with energy should circumstances demand it." Circumstances, I should say, demand that something should be done at once. The disgusted public are beginning to patronise

all sorts of abnormal vehicles—wagonettes, *chars-à-bancs*, *tapissières*, vans, and carts of every description, the drivers of which charge only seventy-five centimes from the central boulevards to the Champ de Mars. To-morrow I shall go down to the banks of the Seine, and see whether they are doing anything with the *bateaux-mouches*—the tiny steamboats which rendered such good service in 1867. Meanwhile the discontented coachmen are to meet in public

conclave on Thursday, by permission of the Prefect of Police, to discuss matters with their masters. The first thing that the drivers have to do is, I take it, to get on their boxes again. I am prepared to be overcharged, but I Want a Cab. The next thing that the authorities should do is to abolish the silly, vexatious, and utterly impracticable flag system. We tried it in London, and the result was disastrous and ridiculous failure.





THAT DEAR OLD PALAIS ROYAL

August 12



I am very much afraid that the Palais Royal, a region which for very many reasons is dearer to me than any locality of which I am aware in Paris, has been, these ten years since, slowly fading to the complexion of the sere, the yellow leaf, socially speaking; and that, had I the honour of the acquaintance of M. le Vicomte Satin des Gommeux of the Jockey Club, or M. Le Général Roguet de la Poguerie of the Cercle des Miriltons, either of those gentleman (on his return from Biarritz or Trouville) might, if questioned concerning that which was once the most fashionable, and which will always be the most famous, resort in the metropolis, reply, with a faintly perceptible *moue* of disdain on his patrician countenance: "Le Palais Royal! Voulez-vous dire celui de Pekin? Le Palais Royal! mais, mon cher, on n'y va plus."

The irrevocable tendency of civilisation is to march from the East to the West. We have heard that axiom before. The movement is from sunrise to sunset; so that when "all earthly things shall come to gloom," and "the sun himself shall die," as the poet Campbell gloomily sings, it will be in the remotest of Occidents that Fashion will expire. The Palais Royal has only experienced the application of a universal law. Fashionable civilisation spreading westward, spreading to

innumerable new boulevards, spreading to the Parc Monceaux, overrunning the Champs Elysées, and threatening to overlap the Bois de Boulogne, has contemptuously pronounced the Palais Royal to be situated, as things go, *dans un pays impossible*. It is no longer a place to dine, to promenade, to flirt, or even to conspire in—from a fashionable point of view. It is too far away. It is fashionably considered at Pekin. The great restaurateurs, Véfour excepted, have deserted the arcades of the Palais Royal for the western boulevards. The cafés are, socially and intellectually, only the shadows of their former selves; and finally the edifice has—temporarily perchance—lost the slight political importance which under the Second Empire it possessed.

The side of the vast quadrangle facing the Rue St. Honoré is, as most people know, a magnificent palace, once the town residence of the Dukes of Orleans. Thither did the profligate cynic Philippe Egalité turn sad eyes as the death-tumbril bore him through the hooting mob, past the old splendid home which he had once inhabited, to where the guillotine awaited him in the Place de la Révolution—now the Place of Concord. And in July 1830, from the windows of that selfsame Palais Royal, did the son of Egalité look wistfully, half fearfully, half hopefully, on another mob, yelling and triumphant, which, after storming the Louvre and

sacking the Tuileries, came screeching the Mar-seillaise, roaring "Vive le Charte!" "Vive la Republique!" "Vive Lafayette!" "Vive Louis Philippe!" The last cry won the day; and Louis Philippe, Duke of Orleans, went forth from the Palais Royal a Citizen King. Eighteen years afterwards the mob came back to his house to turn it out of windows.

The palace of the Palais Royal had, however, enjoyed full twenty years of tranquil splendour. Even before the re-establishment of the Second Empire it had been the residence of the old Jerome Bonaparte, ex-King of Westphalia, the "*petit polisson*" of Napoleon I, the consort *en premières noces* of the ill-used Miss Paterson of Baltimore, and whom his Imperial nephew, not knowing very well what to do, made at last Governor of the Invalides. The old gentleman was a Waterloo man, and had not behaved badly in that fight. By the Parisians he was generally, in virtue of an atrociously twisted conundrum, called "*l'Oncle Tom*," since, it was argued, Napoleon I being "*le Grand Homme*," and Napoleon III "*le Petit Homme*," old Jerome must necessarily stand in the relation of "Uncle Tom," or "*t'homme*," to the latter. His son, Napoleon Jerome, kept high state at the Palais Royal, gave good dinners and bad cigars, and hatched vain intrigues there against his cousin and benefactors, until the Empire tumbled to pieces like a pack of cards—cards marked by gamblers who had lost their cunning and could no longer *faire sauter la coupe*. Very dreary must be the saloons of the palace now. Very dank and dismal must be the empty stable and coachhouses in the courtyard facing the Galerie d'Orleans. How many times have I watched "Monseigneurs," barouches and landaus, with their satin-skinned horses, emerge, spruce, natty, brilliant with sub-Imperial veneer and sub-Imperial varnish, from the stables! Sometimes it was the whim of Monseigneur to travel "post" to his country residence; and on those occasions there would be a full-dress parade in the courtyard of a heavy *berline de voyage*, hung high on C springs, and painted bright yellow. This equipage would be drawn by four fat Picard horses, *gris pommelés* in hue, their manes plaited and tails tied up with particoloured ribbons. Brave in ribbons, likewise, were the glazed cocked-hats

of the postilions, full-powdered their tie-wigs, bright scarlet their waistcoats and the lapels of their green jackets, dazzling white their buckskins, lustrous black their jackboots, radiant the silver badges on their arms. Behind the *berline* came *fourgons*, or closed vans, full perchance of delicacies from Chevet's or Cuvillière's, or Potel and Chabot's, for picnic purposes. On everything external blazed the sub-Imperial arms—the reflection from the greater glory of Imperialism at the Tuileries hard by. The guard turned out; the drums rolled; gleaming arms were presented, as the *berline de voyage* rattled out of the *cour d'honneur* of the Palais Royal. Ichabod! I



suppose that a snuffy old *concierge* or two are deemed to be enough to keep watch and ward, at present, over this ex-Royal, ex-Imperial habitation. The ghost of the Napoleonic era is a very woebegone one, and Bonapartism, *for the moment*, seems to exercise less influence over the minds of the multitude than ever I can remember it to have done. Still it must be admitted that the Second Empire, while it lasted, did things very handsomely indeed. The pieces in its *répertoires* were got up regardless of expense, and its *pourboires* were unstinted. "*Ce que l'on ne saurait nier*," quoth General Fluery, when, at St. Petersburg, he learned of the downfall of his Imperial master, "*c'est que pendant dix-huit ans nous nous sommes diablement amusés*."

Paris is to me a permanent and most wondrous

problem generally; but I do not know anything within its walls more perplexing and more wonderful than the sight of the thousands of well-dressed people who sit all day, and during a great portion of the night, in and outside the boulevard cafés, smoking, drinking, playing at cards and dominoes, and otherwise enjoying themselves. They play piquet and drink *grog*s *Américains*—weak rum-and-water, hot, with sugar and lemon—at eleven o'clock of the forenoon in August; they are playing dominoes and drinking *bocks* of frothy beer, refreshing to the palate but apparently innocent of malt, at six o'clock p.m. They are imbibing coffee and cognac at eight, after dinner. They are consuming ices and *sorbets* at ten; they are sipping more American *grog*s at midnight; and yet, to all seeming, they have not "turned a hair," as the saying is, in the way of inebriety. They are all as sober as judges; and yet they have been laughing and shaking in Rabelais' easy-chair for the last thirteen hours. Who are they? Whence do they come? Where are they going? Where do they live? They cannot be all shopkeepers who have left their wives to manage the shop, since they frequently bring both the male and female branches of their families to the café with them. They bring grandams of eighty, who drink hot rum-punch. They bring little brats of seven, who drink *bocks* and ask for the *Vie Parisienne*. *Vogue la galère!* But where is the galley, and who tugs at the labouring oar? How do they get the money to pay their score and give the *garçon* his *pourboire*? If I were to sit inside or outside a tavern from morn till midnight, even if I drank nothing stronger than barley-water, and smoked nothing more powerful than cigarettes of lavender, those conversant with my affairs would very soon suggest my incarceration at Colney Hatch or the expediency of the removal of myself and household to St. Pancras Workhouse. Again, I frequently notice that, when some depraved vagabond in a tattered blouse is arraigned before the *Cour d'Assises* or the *Police Correctionnelle*, the Public Prosecutor rarely omits to mention in the act of accusation that the prisoner is an habitual haunter of *estaminets* and *brasseries*. Why, it was Public Prosecutor's twin-brother, or at least his *cousin-germain*, that I saw at eleven in the forenoon

drinking hot run-and-water, and blocking his adversaries at dominoes with a double-five at the Café des Mille Constellations! The only solution that I can possibly find for the problem is that the café frequenters are all *propriétaires d'immeubles*; that their grandfathers purchased large slices of the National Domains at peppercorn prices in the year 1792, and that they and all their families have been living prosperously and hilariously on the dividends ever since.

They—if there be indeed such a class of Parisians, deriving their incomes from such a source—do not seem to be much given to patronising the poor old Palais Royal. It is too quiet for them. The passing show is not exciting enough to interest the *flâneur* class. In the daytime, sitting on your rush-bottomed chair outside the Rotonde, you see few people beyond the succession of youthful nurserymaids and elderly *bonnes*. The nurserymaids are occasionally pretty; and if they are not well-favoured, they make up for the absence of good looks by a very fascinating coquettishness; but the ugliness of the elderly *bonnes* is fearful to look upon. When you have seen an old Frenchwoman you have seen Mother Redcap—you have seen the Witch of Endor. These attendants bring with them troops of sickly, monkey-faced children. The French are a gallant, chivalrous, ingenious, and witty people, but they are certainly not a good-looking race; and, as a rule, the dolls in the toy-shops, though facially idiotic, are much prettier than the little girls who nurse them. Children, moreover, of the upper classes have ceased to resort to the Palais Royal to hold skipping competitions or to form daylight quadrilles. The perambulators are few and *Noblesse oblige*; and these gallant sons of Mars have come to pay their homage to the youthful nurserymaids. A "*Mondaine*" rarely shows her painted countenance and elaborate toilette in the garden. Gaunt, pale-faced lads in blouses, smoking cigarettes of bad tobacco or sucking pipes of blackened brier-root, slatternly work-girls in dresses of cheap printed calico from Roubaix or St. Etienne and *coiffées en chevaux*—the pretty and becoming white cap of the Parisian *grisette*, like the *grisette* herself, almost entirely disappeared—are "trapesing" up and down in couples, staring in all the shops,

and apparently in no hurry to go back to their work; while now and again, in a corner behind some angle of stonework, there broods huddled up on a chair, an old, old man, with a parchment face furrowed into a thousand wrinkles, lack-lustre eyes, a weather-beaten hat with the nap all gone and the brim drooping, a patched brown *surtout* buttoned up to his throat and with the place of a button supplied here and there by a pin, deplorable trousers, indescribable shoes, and one glove. Who is he? Balzac must have been aware of him forty years ago. He may be a contemporary of the terrible "Ferragus." Was he prefect under the Restoration, a banker in the days of the Orleans dynasty, a police spy under the Second Empire, a croupier at one of the gaming-houses? To me he looks like an incarnation of the poor old Palais Royal itself run to seed.

And yet they tell me that the Palais Royal is gayer just now than it has been during any period in these eleven years past; but so far as the experience of my own eyes enables me to judge, it has only been momentarily galvanised into a deadly-lively spasm of vitality by the presence of the English and American visitors to the Exhibition. From the minds of these worthy and unsophisticated people you cannot eradicate the long since fixed idea that the Palais Royal is still the centre of "Life in Paris," the pivot on which all Gallic gaieties turn, the "hub" of the Parisian universe, as Boston, in the State of Massachusetts, is the "hub of the Universe," generally speaking. You meet travelled Britons, cosmopolitan Britons, on the Boulevards or in the Rue de la Paix; you look for your travelled American in the courtyard of the Grand Hotel, or under the arcades of the extravagantly magnificent Hôtel Continental, in the Rue de Castiglione; but the "Innocents abroad," be they of British or of Transatlantic origin, float at once to the Palais Royal. I have met to-day at least half a dozen Ritualist curates—they are among the most innocent and the foolishest creatures that I know—the Rev. Mr. Chadband from Stoke Newington, and the Rev. Types Tolodde from De Beauvoir Town; Captain Swabber, R.N., and his numerous family, of Palmerston Road, Southsea; and little Mr. Sam Gynger, M.R.C.S., from Barrow-in-Furness.



Sam is rather a gay dog when he has got the Channel safely between him and Mrs. G. (who is serious), his Unitarian aunts, and his Baptist grandmother; and he informed me, with a sly wink, that after handing over all his patients, *pro.tem.*, to old Nobbler, the general practitioner, he had come to Paris "for a bit of a spree." Ingenuous Samuel! As though the Palais Royal were on the way to the Spree! Equally numerous are the American Innocents. No shrewd and somewhat cynical New Yorkers; but few serene and complacent-with-higher-culture Bostonians; and fewer well-bred, albeit somewhat haughty, South Carolinians and Virginians—they have had losses, and so are bound to keep as stiff an appearance as they can—do you meet under the arcades. But you meet the highly-respectable people from Brattlebury, in the State of Vermont, and Toledo, in the State of Ohio. You meet Professor Popcorn of the Homespun University, Princeton, Delaware; you meet Elder Prigarsin



of the Scandinavian Church of Snickersnee, New Jersey; you meet Dr. Rufus Clamchowder, once Brigadier-General of Volunteers (he fought valiantly at Antietam), at present pharmacist (he has got a patent pill), of Barkum, Blisterum County, Michigan. I met Miss Desdemona Wugg of Philadelphia, author of the alarming work, entitled *Proof Positive; or Shakespeare's Plays written by a Woman, and that Woman a Wugg!* Miss W. wore her celebrated brown-holland dress, with the large mother-o'-pearl buttons, her broad-brimmed beaver hat with the green veil, her tortoiseshell-rimmed spectacles, and her buff-leather gauntlets. Abating her spectacles, she might be one of Cromwell's Ironsides. I was aware of her form afar off, and fled from before her face, even from the *Galérie de Valois* into the *Galérie d'Orléans*; for Miss Wugg is in the habit of carrying a few copies of *Proof Positive* in her reticule, and there would be wailing in France if she made me read that book. *Ça porte malheur*. I began it once, and my tailor at once sent in his account, with a demand for immediate payment.

What do all these excellent people want in the dear old Palais Royal? To change their English and American money into napoleons and five-franc pieces? Why, money-changers' shops abound all over modern Paris; to say nothing of the excellent John Arthur and Co., of the Rue de Castiglione. To buy diamonds and rubies at the few remaining first-class jewellers' shops? No; they scarcely look like people who want expensive jewellery. To dine at the cheap restaurants? Possibly; but then they are here all day—long before lunch and long before dinner-time. They want, I apprehend, to see "Life in Paris;" but the life, dear sirs and madams, is no longer here. The glory of the Palais Royal has departed. The quick-eared, quicker-eyed Hebrews who keep the very cheap jewellery shops, with the open fronts and *Entrée Libre* inscribed over the portals might be very irate did they hear me thus asperse the liveliness of the Palais Royal. I wonder who buys this glittering rubbish—the thin, gilt lockets, with big, staring initials, enamelled in gaudy enamel, or set with false stones; the flimsy necklaces, the pancake-looking brooches, the clumsy bracelets, the sham-gold

tiaras and belts, the multitudinous array of charms for *châtelaines*—a very microcosm of tinsel and pinchbeck. Who buys them? Why, inconsequent radoteur that I am, I used to buy the tinselled and pinchbeck rubbish myself long years ago when I was young:



"Ho, pretty page, with the dimpled chin,
That never has known the barber's shear,
All your aim is woman to win—
That is the way that boys begin—
Wait till you come to Forty Year."

The girls were very pliant when I brought them home the thin gilt lockets with the enamelled initials, the flimsy necklaces, and clumsy bracelets, as presents. They smiled, and said things pleasant to hear. Now, not all the gold of Ballarat, not all the silver of Nevada laid at their feet, would win a smile, save one of derision, from them. I hate girls, and boys too. I will go into the *Café d'Orléans*, and have a glass of Eau de St. Galmier with a cinder in it.

But I can avail myself of a surer recipe for chasing away melancholy in the Palais Royal. I seldom fail to find a cheerful solace by repairing to the *Galerie d'Orléans*, and surveying the contents of that ever-delightful, terracotta pig-shop. Do you know those pigs? They are modelled by a skilful artist named (I think) L. Desbords, who likewise excels in the representation of monkeys, and is even proficient of what may be termed the Humorous Nude, in the shape of little statuettes of ladies more or less in

the costume of Hans Breitmann's Mermaid; but it is in the plastic delineation of porcine life and manners that the genius of M. Desbords most brilliantly shines. He seems to have based his studies first on a careful perusal of a translation of Charles Lamb's *Essay on Roast Pig*; then (to my thinking) he has carefully considered the pig as demonstrated in England by George Morland and in France by Décamps; then he has gone to nature—to the pigsty; and finally he has evolved out of his own internal consciousness an anthropochoisine comedy, preserving in piggy all his piggishness, yet investing him, *pour rire*, with certain human attributes. Thus you see the pig who is "tight," and the pig who is suffering from a headache on the day following his orgy; the pig who is beating, or is being beaten by, his wife; and—subtle stroke of true genius!—*the pig who is having a few words with his mother-in-law*. In the shop where these wondrous porcine terracottas are sold there is besides a plentiful stock of miscellaneous plasticity, comprising many genuine works of art; but I care little for the Antinous or the Callipygian Venus, the Dancing Fawn or the Huntress Diana, in such merry company as that of M. Desbords. *Est modus in rebus*. There is a time to laugh and a time to weep; and when I am in the Galerie d'Orléans my attention is absorbed by the pigs, and by nothing else. But I must get away from the Galerie d'Orléans, and from the Palais Royal too, for

good and all. The place is too full of dissolving views. Why, on the site of this same Orleans passage, were the notorious Galeries de Bois, the resort of all the painted profligacy of the Directory, the Consulate, the First Empire, and the Restoration! In 1815, the Galeries de Bois were nicknamed, owing to the extensive Muscovite patronage which they enjoyed, *Le Camp des Tartares*. But in the year of Invasion and Occupation after Waterloo, when Béranger was writing *Le Ménétrier de Meudon* and *La Complainte de ces Demoiselles*, all Paris was a hostile camp. Our Highlanders bivouacked in the Champs Elysées. Lord Uxbridge's troopers picketed their horses in the Bois de Boulogne. The Russian head-quarters were in the Place Vendôme. The Prussians held the heights of Montmartre. The Austrians were in the Champ de Mars and the Carrousel. But all these alien warriors came down to the Palais Royal, to stare at the jewellers' shops and the painted *demoiselles* of the Galeries de Bois; to lose their money at the gambling-houses, or be cheated out of it at the restaurants. Waterloo was avenged at last by the *gros bataillons* of the bankers at *roulette* and *trente et quarante*, and by the sale to the invaders of many thousand bottles of rubbishing champagne at twelve francs the flask. "Rouge gagne!" "Rouge perd!" "V'la, Monsieur!" and "Garçon, l'addition!" were sweeter sounds to the French ear than the dreadful "Sauve qui peut!" of Mont St. Jean.





PARIS CUT TO PIECES

August 14



I have not yet revisited the Quartier Latin, the districts of the Odéon and the Panthéon, or the long, stately, silent streets of the Fauborg St. Germain:—all situate on what has been termed the "Surrey side of the Seine." When I cross the Pont Neuf, and dive into that which was to me, many years ago, a familiar and a beloved region, I shall have much cause, I fear, for disappointment and regret. I read, for example, the other day that the Rue de la Harpe, that once teeming hive of students, grisettes, and Polish refugees, had been entirely demolished; and I am prepared to find even the Rue de l'Ecole de Médecine reduced to a phantom of its former self. The Paris of Vautrin and the Père Goriot is fast becoming a legendary city; and as for the Paris of Eugène Sue's *Mysteries*, it has been utterly swept away these many years.

Meanwhile the transformation of the city, which, with magical rapidity, has taken place on what we may term the "Middlesex side," is sufficient to amaze and perplex that most assiduous of pedestrians, the "oldest inhabitant," to say nothing of the foreigner who only makes periodical trips to Paris. Take, for instance, one strip of the Boulevard, and one side only thereof, extending from the Madeleine to the Café Anglais. Keep straight on, and there will be no danger of your losing your way. You must reach in time the Rue de Richelieu, the Rue Vivienne, the Rue Montmartre; and I suppose that the

route continues onward, although intersected by many new boulevards, to the ultimate Place de la Bastille. But, branch off to the right from that strip of which I spoke, with the intent, say, of getting into the Rue Neuve St. Augustin, the Rue Neuve des Petits-Champs—how they would stare if you entered a restaurant and asked for a *bouillabaisse*!—or the Rue St. Honoré, and, before you are five minutes older, you will find yourself wandering in the most "feckless" manner among the irreconcilable segments of a Paris which has been cut to pieces. Some of the old side streets, it is true, remain. I come upon the Rue Louis le Grand, the Rue de Port Mahon, the Rue de Grammont, and the Rue St. Anne; but those thoroughfares no longer seem to lead direct to the goals at which they were wont to culminate. Threading the well-remembered, narrow, full-flavoured little thoroughfares, full of *maisons garnies*, fruiterers, and wine-shops, you come suddenly on a great Babel of brand-new streets, broad, lined with tall mansions and splendid shops, abounding with palatial hotels and garish cafés, and blazing with gas, intermingled with the well-nigh blinding, but far from agreeable, electric light.

I am accustomed, for a reason which I shall speedily have the honour of practically explaining to you, seldom to breakfast or dine twice running at the same restaurant. I am making a list of menus and a collection of bills; and a very remarkable body of documentary evidence they will turn out to be, I fancy. Thus, I wished

a couple of evenings since to dine at the Restaurant Gaillon—a very excellent and moderately-priced place of entertainment, hard by the Fontaine Gaillon. Scores of times in old days I have reached that familiar eating-house by the way either of the Rue Louis le Grand or by the Rue de la Michodière. On this occasion I thought that I would take the Michodière route; but, alas, it led me neither to Gaillon's Fountain nor to Gaillon's Restaurant. It landed me on the brilliant but barren strand of a new street, at the upper extremity of which I could discern the colossal but meretricious façade of the new Opera House. Fairly bewildered and *désorienté*, I was fain to ask my way. "Suivez toujours la Rue de la Michodière" was the direction of the obliging citizen in a blouse to whom I addressed myself. But where was the Rue de la Michodière—that part of it at least which was to come? I lighted upon it at last, in a painfully dislocated and fragmentary condition, on the other side of the brand-new street, but certainly two hundred and fifty yards from where I should have expected to find it. I came upon the Fountain and the Restaurant Gaillon last—the last, fortunately, as good as ever, and indeed altogether unaltered.

Ere I enter on the great theme of Paris restaurants, their provisions and their prices, I may just venture parenthetically to note one circumstance typically illustrating the perfectly arbitrary manner in which the tariff of articles of food is made to fluctuate. The water just now in Paris is almost undrinkable. The Faculty are unanimous in denouncing its unwholesomeness; and everybody is diluting his *vin ordinaire* with a slightly aerated and very palatable mineral water called the *Eau de St. Galmier*. It is almost as refreshing as Apollinaris; and the Parisians are patronising it to an enormous extent, not only from gastric but from patriotic motives, St. Galmier being a French source. I have heard, it is true, of one over-scrupulous anti-German gentleman who objected to drink St. Galmier on the ground that it came from the *Source Badois*, and that Baden is in Germany. His scruples were, however, removed, first by exhibiting to him a bottle, from the label of which it was made manifest that the name of the spring was Badoit, with a t instead of an s;

and next, by pointing out to him that if the water had been, indeed, of Teutonic origin, *Source* happens to be a feminine noun, and the requirements of French grammar would have demanded the substitution of *Badoise* for *Badois*. I would say that St. Galmier would yield a very fair profit if it were sold at fourpence a bottle. At the Duval restaurant they charge fifty centimes for this beverage; at restaurants of the second class the price is seventy-five centimes, and at those of the first class a franc. At the grand hotels the charge for St. Galmier is one franc fifty centimes. I never had the audacity to stay at Claridges; but is there any hotel in London the Expensive, I wonder, where they charge eighteenpence for a bottle of soda-water?



But let us return to Paris Cut to Pieces. That which remains of the Michodière puts me in mind but very faintly of old times. There is yet at the boulevard corner of the street a ready-made-clothes shop; but it is a far less pretentious establishment than the one on the same site, of which I remember the "inauguration" some four-and-twenty years ago, and which did business under the imposing title of *Le Prophète*. Whether the prophet in question was Mohammed or John of Leyden, Francis Moore or Zadkiel, was not stated; but the entire concern was, nevertheless, conducted on the loftiest and most ceremonious scale. Why the presence of a *huissier*-like personage of grave and reverend aspect, clad in a full suit of black, with a white cravat, and a steel chain round his neck, should have been provided as necessarily auxiliary to the carrying on the affairs of an emporium of coats, vests, and pantaloons, I could never deter-

mine; nor could the sable-clad and steel-clad functionary himself be considered in the long-run as a success. The French public at large do not like *huissiers*, they associate those officials with the law; and ere long an unpleasant impression arose in the popular mind that the proprietors of *Le Prophète* were in difficulties, and that the solemn individual with the steel chain was the man in possession. After a time they prudently withdrew the man in chains, and I heard that he subsequently transferred his services to the conductors of a three-franc dinner, wine included, in the Passage des Indigestions. Nothing disheartened, however, the *Prophète* people replaced their discredited *huissier* by a stalwart negro, who mounted guard at the boulevard entrance to the shop. In a green tunic, with gilt buttons, buckskins, topboots, and a splendid gold-lace band and cockade to his hat, he looked like one of the Imperial grooms—the grooms of the Emperor Soulouque, I mean. For a time the Ethiop at the *Prophète* was amazingly popular, and attracted large crowds to the slop-shop. “Un beau noir,” the grisettes and bonnes used to say, gazing admiringly at this glorified black man. His reign, however, was brief. He was eclipsed by a yellow-faced Chinaman, with a pigtail and purple petticoat, who was retained by the proprietors of an adjoining tea-shop; and the sable groom, being afflicted besides with a weakness for *le Rhum des Iles*, faded into the Infinities.

But, ah, ere I leave the Rue de la Michodière, to stray hither and thither through Paris Cut to Pieces, my mind recurs to one modest little *boutique*, the disappearance of which awakens the very pleasantest and the very saddest of memoirs. Whereabouts was Madame Busque's? There are cabarets, billiard-rooms, *blanchissages de fin*, milk and fruit-shops galore in the Rue de la Michodière of 1878; but I am unable to fix upon any of these establishments as standing on the premises once tenanted by the excellent old lady whose lot I have not ceased to lament. And who, you will ask, was Madame Busque? She kept a *crémèrie* in the Michodière. She sold butter and eggs, milk and cheese; but in her little back parlour and at her little round table—on which at night-time not more than a single candle was ever permitted to shine—she pro-



vided *déjeuners à la fourchette*, and dinners, fortifying in quantity and delicious in quality. Well do I remember the succulence of her *potage croûte au pot*, and especially her matchless *moules à la poulette*. Her wine was sound, albeit of no particular vintage. Her *fromage de Brie* was superb. One did not care for *Roquefort*, *Camembert*, or *Pont l'Eveque* in those days. We brought our own cigars, *petits Bordeaux*, not infrequently, and costing only a halfpenny, very smokable little weeds. In 1854-5 we had not come to the complexion of *Regalias Britannicas* at a franc apiece. For my part, looking at the fact that it is next door to the impossible to obtain cigars of even tolerable quality in Paris, and not having the courage to smuggle genuine havanas into the territory of the Republic, I would as lief smoke *petits Bordeaux* as anything else. Unfortunately that particular brand has come to be of simply indescribable vileness. The monopoly of the *Régie* is one of the chief social curses of France; the lucifer-match monopoly is another; and since the Siege the quality of both products has been growing steadily worse year after year. The Parisians are accustomed to say bitterly that there exists an infallible preventive against the breaking out of conflagrations in France, namely, to thatch the houses with the government tobacco, and try to set fire to them with the *concession alouettes*. The first won't burn, and the second won't light.

But dear old Madame Busque. She was the worthiest of womankind, the devoutest of Romanists; but she cheerfully gave credit to the heretics among her customers. She depended not on the support of the outside world, being quite content with the patronage of a private clientèle composed mainly of young Americans and Englishmen domiciled in Paris. The Americans taught her to make sundry Transatlantic dishes; and speedily Madame Busque hung out her sign as the *Spécialité de Pumpkin Pies* and the *Délices des Buckwheat Cakes*. I think even that she knew what succotash was, and could have made gumbo soup and clam chowder had the proper ingredients for those mysterious compounds been brought to her. I am very certain that she could mix a cocktail, even to the more recondite preparations of the "eye-opener," "moustache-twister," "morning glory," and "corpse-reviver" kind. The nights we used to have at Madame Busque's! Nearly all the Englishmen who went there in 1854-5—dramatists, journalists, poets, painters, and so forth—are dead; but often, when reading the American papers, I come across the name of some distinguished Congressman or Physician, General


or Judge, in the Great Republic, who, in the old days, came night after night to ply his knife and fork and quaff his cheap *Médoc*, to smoke his *petit Bordeaux*, and tell his tale and sing his song, in the little back parlour behind the *crémérie*. I cannot find the shop; I cannot find the house; but the memories of my own countrymen who made part of the merry circle cluster round me till my old feet, like the friar's in *Romeo and Juliet*, stumble at graves. One of the mournfullest pilgrimages that I ever made in my life was from Madame Busque's breakfast-table, on a bitter January mornig, through thickest snow, to the Cemetery of Montmartre. But we must not indulge in such lugubrious reminbrances. *Vive la bagatelle!* So I struggle through the *disjecta membra* of Paris Cut to Pieces, until I settle down at a little marble table in front of one of the most dazzling cafés of that new Avenue de l'Opéra which has opened up so splendid a vista to the Place du Palais Royal, and has so completely hamstrung, truncated, and spoiled the Rue de la Paix; and blinking like an owl in the radiance of the electric light, I plunge into the wildest revelry of a cold *soda-groseille*.





SUNDAY IN PARIS

August 18

 Among other persons and things in Paris which, to my thinking, seem to have deteriorated—to have visibly degenerated—since the collapse of Imperialism, and the definite adoption of Republican institutions, is the Washerwoman. Her prices are as extravagant as of yore, with twenty per cent. added, “in consequence of the Exposition”; but she is no longer punctual in keeping the appointments which she makes to bring home your linen, and she is apt to lose the articles with which you have entrusted her: offering you in lieu thereof textile fabrics of strange warp and woof and cloudy hue, the property of persons whose personal acquaintance you have not the honour to enjoy. Dudley Costello once wrote a magazine a story called *La Camicia Rapita*, in which he related, with equal grace, humour, and delicacy, how a *mariage de cœur* between two persons moving in the select circles in society was brought about through the gentleman finding among his linen the innermost garment of a lady; the lady on her part being equally a victim of the laundresses’ blunder, and discovering to her horror a masculine indusium in her basket. That is all very well; but I want my own linen, and not that of other folk. Sometimes the French *blanchisseuse* loses, say, a white waistcoat alto-

gether; still she never omits to charge seventy centimes for it in her bill. “But where is my waistcoat?” you ask, in stern reproachfulness. “I know not,” she replies, with touching naiveté; “all that I know is that I washed it before I lost it.” So, it will be remembered, did Othello kiss Desdemona before he killed her; still the caress was but a slight compensation to poor Mrs. O.

The modern Parisian laundress, although still an incomparable ironer and “getter-up,” has sadly fallen off as a *blanchisseuse*. She burns holes in your linen with the *eau de Javelle*, or some other abominable caustic solution which she uses; and she either starches too much or not at all. She is no longer pretty—the demand, perhaps, for *sujets* at the theatres of Cluny and Belleville is, perhaps, too exigent; and the juvenile apprentice to soapsuds is contemptuously spoken of as *un baquet*, a tub; but it is of her unpunctuality that I chiefly complain. You may well scribble *à rendre incessamment* at the foot of your bill. She laughs, to all seeming, derisively at the injunction. The week slips away. Saturday comes and goes. You look from your window, and behold scores of elaborately-frilled skirts borne past you in ironical triumph on poles, and you rage at the thought of your own destitution. Those *jupes* are going home to their fair owners; but your washerwoman cometh not.

Fancy Mariana waiting desolate in the Moated Grance for her "things." Or it may be that Mariana's young man could not come to her for the reason that he had been disappointed by his washerwoman. Where is that false *blanchisseuse*? Did she stay too late last night at the Folies Bergère? Has she gone off to the Fête Patronale at St. Germain-en-Laye, at Choisy-le-Roi, or at Bourg-la-Reine? Or like the heroine in *L'Assommoir*, has she come to fisticuffs with a sister *blanchisseuse* at the public washhouse, and is consequently laid up with a black eye?

"Pan, pan, pan! Margot au lavoir,
Pan, pan, pan! à coups de battoir;
Pan, pan, pan! va laver son cœur,
Pan, pan, pan! tout noir de douleur."

What have I to do with her affairs of the heart? I wish that she would bring home my washing.

There is this much, however, to be said of Margot. She does not wholly throw you over so as to satisfy at least a portion of the needs on the Seventh Day. No one knows better than she does that Sunday in Paris is a day of merry-making and rejoicing, and that, as Artemus Ward put it, "it is difficult to be festive without a clean biled rag." So she lets you have something before noon on the Sabbath. It may be only a tithe of the basketful to which you are entitled; still it is something which will enable you to make a cleanly Sabbath appearance, and you must be thankful for small mercies. Half a loaf is better than no bread. In her heart of hearts Margot must admit that it would be the height of cruelty, *une lâcheté des lâchetés*, to deprive you even to the slightest extent of the means of enjoying that holiday which she herself so dearly prizes. She has very probably been overwhelmed with work during the week, and has sat up all Saturday night ironing and folding, so as to be able to satisfy the needs of some of her customers early on Sunday, and have the rest of the day to herself.

This is not by any means the way in which we understand the Sunday question in England; nor can I more fitly preface the brief observations which I am about to make on Sunday in Paris than by pointing out that it is utterly and entirely hopeless to expect the slightest assimilation or reconciliation of ideas between French and English people touching their respective observ-

ance of the Sabbath. A British Sunday is one thing, and a Continental Sunday another; and you can no more hope to bring about a likeness between the two than you can turn vinegar into oil or black into white. I am not speaking on this matter from brief or imperfect experience. Forty years ago I used, as a schoolboy, to get my exeat, or "day rule"—unless I was "kept in" for high crimes and misdemeanours—at ten o'clock on Sunday morning. My sister and I used to go to the English Episcopal church in the Rue d'Aguesseau; and after the service we proceeded, under the guardianship of kind French friends, thoroughly to enjoy ourselves. We took our walks on the Boulevards, in the Palais Royal, or in the Garden of the Tuileries, peeping in at all the gay shops; we were treated to breakfast at a restaurant and to ices at Tortoni's; in the afternoon we listened to the military band playing in the Place Vendôme; at proper seasons of the year we went to the Fête of St. Cloud, the



fanfare at Vincennes, or to Versailles to see the *grandes eaux* play; and in the evening, if we were not taken to the theatre or the opera, we had that which to us children was a gala-dinner at some friend's house. After dinner the ladies and gentlemen sang secular songs and played "minuets and rigadoons," or at least something for us to dance to; while in a snug corner of the salon the curé of the parish—yes, that venerable and benevolent ecclesiastic—enjoyed his game of whist with M. le Général des Trois Sabres and the family notaire; and Madame de Vie-Brisée, who was nearly eighty years of age,

plied her spinning-wheel, and told us, in the intervals between our romps, moving stories of the Great Revolution and the noble and beautiful heads that were cut off during the Reign of Terror. She used to wear a black-silk calash, and her hair was as white and as silky as the flax she spun. She was a peaceful, cheerful old lady; yet her father, her husband, her brother, *avaient tous passés par là* — the Guillotine.

As regards Sunday in Paris, as it was when my life began, so it is now that I am a man; and so, in all probability, it will be when I grow old, and after I am dead. With some very slight exceptions, to which I shall presently call attention, I fail to observe any material difference between the Parisian Sunday as it used to be kept in August 1838, and the Parisian Sunday as it is kept in 1878. Here is the actual Sunday, as I see it from the ground-floor saloon, open to the street, of the Café Véron, at the corner of the Rue Vivienne and the Boulevard. I am breakfasting at an hour which, in England, forms rigorously a part of church-time. The Café Véron is not a private club. It is a house of public entertainment; and the proprietor thereof—his wife and daughter are officiating as *dames de comptoir*—is, to all intents and purposes, a licensed victualler. I may be content with a modest flask of St. Galmier, or a cup of tea with my breakfast, but my worthy host is quite ready to supply me, *hic et nunc*, with any quantity of burgundy, champagne, or moselle—or brandy, rum, whisky, or hollands—that I may choose to order. As a matter of fact, I can discern, on dozens of little tables inside and outside the Café Véron, the ruddy glow of cognac in the *carafons*. At all the churches there have been Matins this morning, and, indeed, the youngest daughter of the proprietor, radiant in her Sunday best, has just come back from High Mass at St. Eustache. She places her parasol and her gilt *paroissien* on one of the little tables, and very contentedly despatches her breakfast *coram publico*, after which she relieves her mama at the receipt of custom behind the comptoir. This system of “shifts” and reliefs, this “turn and turn about” of watches, as on board ship, seems to go on continually without unduly fatiguing anybody. The present Sunday

may not be the youngest daughter’s “Sunday afternoon out,” for the dearly beloved promenade; but it may be her “Sunday evening out,” to go to the play; while if one *dame de comptoir* is devout and attends Matins, there is no reason why another shall not attend Vespers. At the same time the Law does not require the cafés to be closed because one section of the community goes to church and another stays away.



As for the traffic on the Boulevards during the present Sunday in Paris, it is certainly at least four times greater, and naturally so, since I first made acquaintance with this city. The population has more than doubled. I think that Galignani for 1839 gives 800,000 as the number of souls in the Lutetia of Louis Philippe; but the facilities of locomotion, and the number of holiday-makers who enjoy a portion of their holiday on wheels, have increased during the last generation in a much larger ratio. Dublin has often been qualified as the “most car-drivingest city in the world;” but the Paris of the existing epoch may certainly be defined as the city *par excellence* for one-horse chaises or open victorias. The suddenness and the completeness of the cessation of the cab-strike were significant proof of the imperative necessity for supplying a popular demand. The

poorer class of Parisians have no need for *coupés*, and will dispense with *fiacres*; but the open chaises or victorias they must and will have. They are patronised on Sunday to an amazing extent. The modern Parisian victoria is, from a police point of view, designed to contain either two or four passengers; but on Sundays there seems no limit to the number of men, women, children, and dogs that—always by amicable arrangements with the *cocher*—can be packed between the two rickety wheels. The horse is not consulted. He is bound to go till he drops, and very often does drop.

In our metropolis, save when there is a funeral or a political meeting is in progress, you very rarely see working people riding about in cabs; but the tremendous affluence of the many-headed into these conveyances is to me one of the most curious features of a Sunday in Paris. There is for this, as for most other sublunary things, a good and sufficient reason. The Parisian petty tradesman very rarely keeps a chaise-cart. The costermonger rarely possesses even the humblest of donkey-carts. Gigs are rare; so the Parisian shopkeeper or working man, when he wishes to give his "missus and the young 'uns" a ride on Sunday, joins with a number of his friends similarly disposed, and makes a bargain with the driver of one or more victorias. Where they all drive to, I really have not the remotest idea. Perhaps it is from the Madeleine to Bastille, and from the Bastille to Madeleine, and back again: all day long. Assuredly there could not be found in the whole civilised world a more diverting drive. To these incessantly succeeding chariots—the Automedons of which are not, as a rule, by any means so skilful as he who conducted Achilles—must be added a legion of much more powerful and much more headily-laden omnibuses than I ever remember to have seen in the Paris of the past. The "knifeboard" has become a recognised institution, the *bureaux de correspondance* of the 'buses are perpetually thronged; and in the outskirts of the city tramway-cars follow each other so closely that you fancy you are gazing on so many American railway-trains which have become accidentally disjointed.

I do not think that I shall be accused of exaggeration in saying that on the Sabbath the

vehicular traffic on the inner boulevards is doubled. The huge railway drays and the *fourgons* of mercantile horse-vehicles powerfully horsed, but recklessly driven—are indeed pleasantly conspicuous by their absence on Sunday; but to the interminable procession of omnibuses and cabs must be added the abnormal Exhibition traffic; the special vans and *chars-à-bancs* and *tapissières*, holding from thirty to fifty passengers, each bound to the Champ de Mars, and an almost equally numerous *cortège* of pleasure wagons going out of town to the village festivals round about Paris. To remoter hamlets the railway-trains are gaily flying; and endless relays of *convois* come and go between Paris and Versailles, St. Germain, St. Cloud, Bellevue, Poissy, Auvers-sur-Oise, Rueil, Mantes, and even Fontainebleau.

I must hasten, albeit the task is not an encouraging one, to disabuse the minds of my countrymen, whose experience of Paris is only short and superficial, of the notion that the Sabbath observance is, from an English point of view, increasing in Paris, because less manual labour is done in Paris on the Sabbath, than was formerly the case. These phenomena have nothing, save in the rarest and most isolated cases, to do with any change in the religious sentiments of the people. I am given to understand that Protestant missionary work is going on in sundry districts in Paris, but the results of these well-meant attempts at evangelisation can only be as a drop of water in the vast ocean of Parisian Sabbath desecration;—as we understand it to be desecrated. My *coiffeur* has in his shaving saloon a neat little placard conveying the information that his establishment will be "*fermé les dimanches et fêtes après une heure de l'après-midi.*" But his polite assistant, when I went to get shaved this morning, was busy over his own ambrosial locks with a pair of curling tongs; and his young and buxom consort had her hair in papers. I don't think these symptoms looked church or chapel, or Sunday school, or a Mothers' Meeting by and by. They looked much more like the maddening wine-cup—or coffee-cup—and the mazy dance later in the afternoon. There are plenty of jewellers' and linen-drapers' and tailors' shops—shops which it appears to me are quite need-



Open Air Concert - Champs-Élysées



Montmartre Studio

lessly kept open—which do not close their doors on Sunday here; but on the other hand, especially in the neighbourhood of the Rue de la Paix, the Rue Scribe, the Chaussée d'Antin, and the Avenue de l'Opéra, there are large numbers of commercial establishments which are as hermetically sealed as the banks and public offices.

But I should be a blockhead were I to assume, and a hypocrite were I to maintain, that an increase in religious fervour—as we understand it—is at the bottom of this partial abstinence from Sunday labour. The smaller money-changers' shops are all wide open; so are the toy-shops, and the confectioners and pastry-cooks; because foreigners want to change money, and French people are in the habit of buying playthings and sugarplums for their children on Sunday; but in the majority of instances it is not on that day that the public require to purchase velvets and satins, Aubusson carpets, carved oak furniture, embossed paper hangings, Madapolam calicoes, or the new *Cestus of Aglae* corsets. For lack of custom many of the

great *magasins* close their doors, and those which continue to open do so more from habit than from the expectation of selling anything. Do you for one moment think that the male and female *employés* in these closed establishments utilise their emancipation by going to church, or sitting at home and reading good books, or staring grimly at each other till they begin to yawn and nod, and at last fall asleep from sheer weariness. They will the rather pour on to the boulevards, to fill the cabs and the cafés, to chatter and gesticulate, to eat, drink, and be merry, to dance and drink, and to go to the play at night. I was not consulted when this City was built and the manners of the inhabitants were formed. Whether the Parisians' mode of observing Sunday is harmless or mischievous, it would be dangerously dogmatic to assert. I only describe that which I see; and this is Sunday in Paris as I have seen and known it, man and boy, any time these forty years, come the twenty-ninth day of August next.





FIGARO HERE, FIGARO THERE!

August 31



The Rue Drouot, like the Rue Lafitte and the Rue Lepelletier, continues, in despite of the *Haussmanisation* of the Second Empire and the *Duvalisation* of the Third Republic, to maintain its character as an essentially and eminently Parisian street. Strange tricks have been played with most of the thoroughfares in its neighbourhood; still the Rue Drouot has hitherto triumphantly defied all the attempts of an iconoclastic municipality to cut it to pieces. The unfortunate Rue de la Chaussée d'Antin no longer knows itself, so mercilessly has it been new boulevarded in its northern portion; and there is something—I have not yet been able to discover with precision what it is—the matter with the present topography of the Rue Taitbout, as compared with its former lines; but it is as easy as ever to travel in the Rue Drouot, and to my thinking this thoroughfare is, with the exception of the new *installation* of the *Figaro* newspaper, delightfully unchanged. May its immutability be perpetual!

After breakfast—I mean the *déjeuner à la fourchette*, not the British tea, eggs, bacon, and toast hour—say about two in the afternoon, is the time to travel in the Rue Drouot. It is not a very quiet place, being normally, perhaps, as bustling as Cranbourn-street, Leicester-square, which in its artistic aspect it very much resembles; still it is free from the incessant and deafening roar of the main boulevards. One likes to hear the “city’s busy hum;” and towns

as tranquil, say, as Cordova or Toledo in Spain, or Ghent or Bruges in Belgium, are apt, after a time, to induce a fit of the megrims. When people are really alive it is incumbent upon them now and again to exhibit signs of their vitality; but the Boulevards which stretch from the Madeleine to the Bastille are more than alive; they seem to be hysterical, delirious, or in a permanent crisis of some great agony which constrains them to make a terrific disturbance. The exceeding fierceness of those who were wont to come out of the Tombs of Old has been accounted for by the supposition that when they emerged from their caverns in the morning they were likewise exceeding hungry; and uncertainty as to where they were to get any breakfast may have had much to do with their habit of shrieking and running amok. A like fierceness characterised the dogs of Eyoub in the Golden Horn, Constantinople, at early morn. The homeless curs of the other districts of Stamboul and of Pera know very well when the butchers’ and bakers’ shops will open, and when the time for flinging them stale crusts or scraps of offal will arrive; but at Eyoub there is nothing but a mosque, a quantity of tombstones, and a few mud hovels inhabited by people who habitually have not enough bread for themselves; and this gives the dogs of the district an exceptionally wolfish aspect, and hyena-like temper. I cannot help fancying that garroters—remember, that the vast majority of those criminals are hulking young fellows, between nineteen and twenty-three, endowed with a powerful physique, rude

health, and tremendous appetites—are not in the habit of obtaining their breakfasts regularly. Consequently they come out of the slums of Seven Dials and Whitechapel “exceeding fierce.” Consider how lamb-like is their demeanour in chapel at Pentonville or Millbank. They have a pleasant prescience that when the worthy chaplain has done his office the panikin full of nice hot gruel and the welcome hunk of bread will be waiting for them.

Meanwhile the Boulevards bawl and bellow, not only at early morn—the disturbance, as from sad matutinal experience I know full well, begins at five a.m.—but until high noon, and throughout the afternoon, and deep into the night. “A cette heure,” writes to me a wise French friend, “les femelles commencent à hurler.” Those mad shrieks borne on the night-wind are inexpressibly suggestive to the mind. *Fini de rire*. The time for hilarity is over, for that ululation has begun. Who can be screaming, what about, and where; are matters that do not concern you. You happen to live in a Haymarket—an old-fashioned Haymarket, not the present, regenerated thoroughfare—some six miles long. The yell may mean murder. It may be a sudden spasm of remorse, or the despairing cry of the intended suicide; or it may merely be Lalie and Phrosyne exchanging a piercingly boisterous good-night with Gugusse and Polyte. But you hear the shriek all the same, even as in London the deep stillness of the night-season in the very quietest of neighbourhoods is broken by the piercing treble of the locomotive whistle at the distant terminus.

From sunrise to midnight you hear also, on the Boulevards, the well-nigh incessant cracking of whips—a sound extremely distressing to nervous ears, taking your mind back, as it does, to the dark days of negro slavery, and inducing the suspicion that ferocious Legree, indefinitely multiplied, is operating upon Uncle Tom at the corner of every street. Fortunately the whips are only those of the omnibus and cab-drivers. I wish they would not agitate their thongs quite so frequently or so violently. I do not think that the French are designedly cruel to their horses, save in so far as they drive the poor, half-starved “screws,” in an inconceivably blundering and careless manner; but they seek to stimulate

the sorry jades by a startling reverberation, which they produce by throwing out the lashes of their whips laterally: somewhat as a Mexican “greaser” throws out his lasso. Now when a whip is thus cracked by a Jehu as skilful as the Postillon de Longjumeau the horse is duly incited to action, and no harm is done to anybody; but when a horde of untutored and undisciplined charioteers come lumbering, clattering, plunging, or crawling six abreast on the Boulevard Poissonière, flourishing their whips and flinging out the thongs thereof in all directions, and you happen to be riding in a victoria in the midst of the ruck, the chances are about equal as to your own driver hitting some passing passenger over the bridge of the nose, or of a playful cabby, either to the right or to the left of you, cutting out your eye as he lurches past.

To such perils you are scarcely exposed in the sober Rue Drouot. The traffic is never long congested; and, indeed, at some periods so trifling is the press of locomotion that the pedestrian can enjoy one of the most dearly-prized privileges of a Frenchman—that of walking on a hot afternoon in the centre of the roadway, and with his hat off. The practice dates from the time when sidewalks were unknown in the small streets of Paris, and peaceable people walked at large (just keeping clear of the great black gutter) to avoid disputes about the wall. There may be those who regret the *ruisseau*. There were, forty years ago, bare-legged industrials who earned a livelihood by carrying ladies safely across the swollen kennel after a shower of rain. For a lady the fee was ten centimes, for a child or pet poodle five; but the open kennel did not disappear without many sighs on the part of conservatism. Were there not those who wept for Nero, and for Old Smithfield?

The existing drainage of the City of Paris is, I am given to understand, a colossal monument of sanitary engineering, and in a scientific sense, perfect. I know that MM. Victor Hugo and Maxime du Camp have written eloquently and exhaustively enough about the sewers; still I cannot help fancying that the practice of deodorisation continues to leave something to be desired. The odour of the back streets of Paris in warm weather is, even in the most fashionable districts, the reverse of agreeable. No charge,

however, of this nature need be adduced against the Rue Drouot, which is, comparatively speaking, a very ancient thoroughfare, and in which, when you are travelling in it, you find so many interesting sights to engage your attention that you are indifferent to the odours of the place. Unless I am grievously mistaken, the Kitai-gorod at Moscow is not a very sweet-smelling locality; certain quarters of Constantinople are redolent of a decidedly villainous perfume; the Calle de los Sierpes at Seville has a rather "loud" aroma; and the back streets of Venice would be all the better for a little diluted carbolic acid. But such trifles are scarcely worth noticing. M. Louis Veuillot found nothing but ambrosial gales in the reeking lanes of Papal Rome; and how should we stand as archæologists, antiquaries, art-critics, and "curio"-collectors, if we were all so many Mr. Edwin Chadwicks, C.B.?

The curiosities of the Rue Drouot are, first the Hôtel Drouot itself; next the *installation*, or offices of the *Figaro* newspaper; and finally the *bric-à-brac* shops. Let us take the *Figaro*. Respecting the politics of this remarkable daily journal—certainly the most conspicuous specimen of the daily press published on the Continent, but, on the whole, about as unlike an English newspaper as a Parisian restaurant is unlike the Freemason's Tavern—I am not called upon to say anything. The *Figaro* may be, for aught I know, Legitimist, Clerical, Bonapartist, Orleanist, Conservative, or Ultra-Radical Republican and Socialist; its politics may be, as Mr. Bob Sawyer confessed on that memorable wet evening at Birmingham, "a kind of plaid;" or,

as the Americans say, "a little mixed;" or, finally, the *Figaro* may have no politics at all. It did not occur to me to ask the courteous *Secrétaire de la Rédaction*, who received me under the peristyle of the Hôtel du Figaro, what his convictions as to public affairs might be; nor did he make any inquiries as to my personal opinions on the Eastern Question. We met on common and remarkably pleasant ground, when an equally courteous gentleman to whom he introduced me conveyed to me an invitation to breakfast and the offer of a box at the Grand Opera. I had, however, a great deal to see at the *Figaro* before I could devote myself to pleasure. I have seen many curious newspaper-offices before now; but a more peculiarly characteristic *installation* than that of the *Figaro* I have never beheld. All comparisons with establishments of the same kind in my own country I banish, of course, at once from my mind. The secrets of my own prison-house in Peterborough Court, Fleet Street, I would not dare to reveal—the "Society" journals, it would seem, know more about them than I do; but I have been permitted to peep behind the scenes of the *New York Herald*, of the *Levant Herald* in the Rue de Pera, of the *Neue Freie Presse* at Vienna, of the *Epoca* at Madrid, and of the *Journal de St. Pétersbourg*. Each and every one of these offices presented a distinct and typical cachet, yet all possessed certain features in common; but the *Figaro* is confessedly wholly and entirely *sui generis* as a newspaper-office. It is all very handsome, but it is remarkably business-like. The barber's razor is beautifully polished and sumptuously mounted; but the tonsor himself is as



sharp as that celebrated manufacturer mentioned in *David Copperfield*—Mr. Brooks of Sheffield. Everything that can possibly please the eye and tickle the fancy of the *abonné* is liberally provided at the bureaux of this essentially "smart" publication; but there is another Eye, invisible to some, but firmly fixed in the very centre of the *façade* of the building—an Eye beneath which might be inscribed our own highly-esteemed *Bell's Life* motto, *Nunquam dormio*—an Eye which, with the constancy of the needle to the pole, is directed to the Main Chance. Long ago it was said of the Frenchman that, "né malin il inventa le vaudeville:" the proprietary body of the *Figaro* born wide awake has invented the art of holding an unprecedented number of thousands of *abonnés* with that glittering Eye.

I visited the offices of the *Figaro* in the first instance as a bold stranger. I had heard that its *Salle des Dépêches* was open to the public day and night; so, as one of the public, I proceeded to the Rue Drouot to participate in a wholly gratuitous entertainment. There are so very few places in Paris, apart from the public museums and picture-galleries, which can be seen for nothing; and with regard to the establishments above the portals of which *entrée libre* is written, I might counsel you to bear in mind the wise maxim which bids us to beware of the Greeks and of the gifts which they give. To be admitted ostensibly free, gratis, and for nothing to a Champs Elysées concert, to be generously allowed to listen to bad instrumental music and worse singing, and to be called upon to pay three francs fifty centimes for a glass of sour beer, a cup of chicoried coffee, or some brandy which makes you sick, may be humorous from the proprietor's point of view, but is scarcely a comic transaction so far as you are concerned. I rejoice, however, to remark that *la consommation* was not obligatory in the *Salle des Dépêches* in the Rue Drouot. No waiter importuned me to give my orders, nor did anybody ask me to buy anything; although there were a good many articles on the walls for which I might have made an offer, such as pictures and water-colours sent here for sale. Telegraphic despatches from all parts of the world are here duly displayed; and you may learn the latest news from Bosnia and Herze-

govina, from China and Peru, from Capel Court and from Crim Tartary. The fluctuations of native and foreign bonds can be studied, and the latest state of the odds on horseraces ascertained; but the *Salle des Dépêches*—through which, it is calculated, some twenty-five thousand persons pass in the course of every twenty-four hours—serves other purposes than the foregoing. The room is a kind of bazaar for works of art, and a great advertising-hall, in which highly remunerative prices are obtained for wall-space.



To the Parisian, born a *flâneur* and a "mooner," this eleemosynary lounging-place must be a source of constantly-renewed delight. So much to stare at, and nothing to pay! Telegrams and despatches from Bosnia and Herzegovina, Capel Court and Crim Tartary, are mingled with glowing polychromatic advertisements of the renowned Chocolat Patapouff, the Racahout des Kabyles, the Petits Saucissons des Abrutis, the Eau de Vie des Cuistres, the Magazins du Mauvais Marché, the Maison de Blanc de la Grande Croquemitaine, Ninon de l'Enclos Tooth-Powder, Robert Macaire's Moral Cough-Lozenges, Joan of Arc's Aromatic Sticking-Plaster, and Curius Dentatus's Rhinocerus-Horn False Teeth. If there be anything odd or out of the way floating about Paris it is picked up by the *Figaro*, and exhibited in the *Salle des Dépêches*. Recently there was shown a specimen of the wretched ration of forage allowed by the Compagnie Générale des Voitures to their overworked cattle. I should not be surprised to see Peter the Great's will; or the sabre which was "the happiest day" in the life of M. Joseph Prud-

homme; or Robespierre's skull when he was a young man; or the skin of the young woman dissected by Thomas Diafoirus, all displayed in the *Salle des Dépêches* of the *Figaro*. The astute proprietary of that journal are no losers by their liberality. The Salle was formerly a wine-shop. The *Figaro* brought out the *marchand de vins* at a very heavy figure; but the revenue accruing from the advertisements is already beginning to yield a very large profit; the institution itself—feebly imitated by another journal or two—enhances the prestige and popularity of the *Figaro*; and who shall say but that, in many instances, the apparently unprofitable *flâneur* comes from the *Salle des Dépêches* metamorphosed into that being so dear to the proprietorial heart, a full-fledged *abonné*—a yearly subscriber to the astute journal with the glittering Eye.

I have never, so far as I know, seen the *abonné* in the flesh, and under gregarious conditions; so having posted some letters—a post-office letter-box and a telegraph-office are among the facilities offered to the public in the *Salle des Dépêches* of the *Figaro*—I entered the offices of the journal itself, and asked to be allowed to have a peep at some *abonnés*, if there happened to be any on the premises. There were plenty. A kind of gentleman-usher of mature age, who looked so grave and reverend that he might have been Gil Blas' father—who, you will remember, became an *escudero* in his declining years, his wife adopting the vocation of a *dueña*—conducted me up a large and softly-carpeted staircase, and thence into a spacious antechamber, the walls hung with antique tapestry, Venetian mirrors, and trophies of antique weapons, and plentifully furnished with fauteuils and divans. The prevailing style of the decorations was Hispano-Moresque; and this indeed is the keynote of the scheme in architecture and embellishment of the *Figaro* offices, the façade of which, looking on the Rue Drouot, is adorned by a bronze statue of the immortal barber himself, looking as elegantly impudent and as amusingly knavish as he does in the finest French comedy and the finest Italian opera that the declining years of the wicked, worn-out, eighteenth century can boast. The sculptor of this bronze effigy of the tonsor of the Plaza San Tomas at Seville gained the prize in

an animated competition among some of the first plastic artists in France; and terra-cotta models of the *Figaro* which did not win the prize, albeit some of the figures are of rare merit, are displayed on brackets in the antechamber.

The polite gentleman who was my cicerone next led me to a gallery, or *loggia*, running round a quadrangular covered courtyard, answering precisely to the *patio* of a house at Seville: only in the centre, instead of a fountain, there was a monumental bust in marble of Beaumarchais, and round three of the sides there were handsomely carved oaken screens, pierced with pigeon-holes, through which money and papers were being continually passed. I could look down on three ranges of spruce clerks sitting behind the usual big ledgers, while on the other side of the screens there was a throng of all sorts and conditions of people busily engaged in paying cash and receiving documents. "Ah!" I thought, "these are the advertisers. An estimable race. Blessed be the advertisers!" Not at all. I was quite in error. The Hispano-Moresque *patio* was the *Bureau des Abonnements* of the *Figaro*; and the multitude on whom I was looking down were the *abonnés* "in the flesh" whom I had been seeking—the quarterly, half-yearly, or annual subscribers to the most popular journal in France. The majority of English journals publish their subscription terms; and an Englishman resident, say, in Italy or the interior of France, usually subscribes for some London paper or another. Of course we have all heard in England of the "Subscriber from the First"—and pretty airs he gives himself sometimes in his correspondence on the strength of his seniority in subscription. He is the twin-brother of "Constant Reader," and I am even inclined to think that he is at least the cousin-german of "Paterfamilias," that he knows the real name of "Vindex," and that he most probably has a bowing acquaintance with the "Oldest Inhabitant."

But there is no mystery about the French *abonné*. He is a palpable entity, frequently wearing spectacles and carrying an umbrella. Monsieur Joseph Prudhomme, for example, must have been born an *abonné*. Journals of different shades of opinion present equally, of course, varied aspects of the *abonné*, from the clean-



shaven, sleek-faced, sable-clad gentleman who subscribes to the *Univers*, to the stout bourgeois in the light overcoat who has taken in the *Constitutionnel* ever since the days of Louis Philippe, and the elderly austere personage, with the ribbon of the Legion and a tortoiseshell snuffbox, who pins his faith to the *Journal des Débats*, and thinks M. John Lemoinne the greatest publicist in France. Then there is the Republican advocate with the closely-trimmed black whiskers, who swears by the *République Française*; the retired major of dragoons, with his fierce moustache and bushy beard; or the ex-Prefect, under the Second Empire, of the Department of the Haute Gruyère or the Brie Inférieure



—rather a shabby and trade-fallen ex-official just now—who would sooner give up his *demi-tasse* and *petit verre* after dinner than abandon his *abonnement* to the *Pays*. Of a subscriber to the

Marseillaise I cannot form any very definite idea; but I vaguely imagine him to be a mild personage, with dove-coloured hair and whiskers, who wears mittens when it is cold and goloshes when it rains. It is usually your mild and meek people who are most pleased with the ferocious in journalism. I did happen to have an interview with both the chief editor and the manager of this same formidable *Marseillaise* some nine years ago. It was at the trial before the High Court of Justice at Tours of Prince Pierre Bonaparte for the murder of Victor Noir. The *rédacteur en chef* and the *gérant* of the *Marseillaise* had been summoned as witnesses for the prosecution; and as they both happened to be undergoing sentences of imprisonment in Ste. Pélagie for press offences, they had been brought from Paris in custody, and were conducted into court under escort of a couple of *gendarmes* apiece. The editor was Henri Rochefort, Vicomte de Lucay—a tall, pale, nervous gentleman in full evening dress, and not looking in the least like a fire-eater. The name of the manager I forget; but a more affable and polite personage I never gazed upon. He was continually smiling and bowing all round; and his eyes quite beamed through his spectacles at the president, the jury, the procurator-general, the counsel for the defence, the journalists, the public, and especially the august prisoner. He, the affable manager, subsequently got shot when the troops from Versailles entered Paris after the Commune; and he died, I was told, heroically.

It is necessary to remark that, although the French newspaper subscriber may differ in particular from his congener, he is identical with him in general. He is an *abonné* first and a citizen afterwards. He has a fearful temper. There is no end to his complaints. He will not be trifled with: mind that. He knows his rights, and insists on having them. Let there be not the slightest mistake about that. He may be arrogant, exigent, and captious; but it is worth while, on the proprietor's part, to conciliate and to defer to him, since the *abonné* is the very backbone of the circulation of a French newspaper. Sometimes, when he takes offence, he is implacable. Then he becomes a *désabonné*; and there is wailing for him as for a lamb that has strayed from the fold.

The *Figaro* contains on most days of the week a number of advertisements printed in very small type, and in the most abbreviated form that is practicable. Some of these are trade announcements; others are of the nature of those classed as "personal" in the *New York Herald*. Thus I read in the *Figaro* of Monday: "Prince Authentique.—Epous. dem. ou veuve." This means that a gentleman bearing the title of Prince, and as to the authenticity of whose rank there cannot be the slightest doubt, is willing to enter into a matrimonial alliance with a spinster or a widow-lady who would like to be a Princess. Sometimes to these curiously candid offers is appended the reminder "*Sérieux*," which reminds me of an addendum I once read in the *Herald* from a lady who wished to marry "an elderly and affluent widower, slightly afflicted with the gout." "Gentlemen who wish to make fun need not apply," concluded the fair incognita. The advertisements to which I have referred in the *Figaro* are styled *petites annonces*, and are received and paid for "over the counter" in the Rue Drouot; but the great mass of trade notices come through the Compagnie Générale des Annonces, a body who are farmers-general of advertisement in all the great newspapers of Paris. The advertiser, consequently, rarely makes his presence felt at the *Figaro* offices: his place is supplied by the loud-voiced and determined-visaged *abonné*.

Ere I quit the antechamber leading to the *loggia* overlooking the covered courtyard, I must bestow a glance on the numbers of curious people waiting patiently in hopes (I presume) of seeing the editor or manager of the journal. There is a Zouave. What on earth can he want? There is a widow in deep mourning, with three little children. There are a brace of jovial priests in black soutanes and shovel hats, who, as they lounge on one of the divans, whisper to each other so confidentially and exchange such hilarious chuckles that I fancy one priest must be relating to the other such a "*Bonne Histoire*" as that suggested in the well-known picture. Or, it may be, these estimable ecclesiastics are conversing about the Orphelinat at Auteuil, in which M. Saint-Genest, the military *rédacteur* of the *Figaro*, has taken so laudable an interest, and in aid of the funds of which excellent insti-

tution the readers of the *Figaro* subscribed in the course of a few days a sum of something like 300,000f. The fact is all the more worth mentioning, when it is remembered that the French, although bountiful in private almsgiving, have hitherto been slow in responding to appeals for public subscriptions. That wonderful system of ours of "voluntary contributions" is virtually in its infancy among our neighbours, simply for the reason that they have hitherto been accustomed to look, in times of pressure, to the State, and to the State alone. The development which M. Saint-Genest has been the means of giving to private munificence among his countrymen will mark, it is to be hoped, a new point of departure in the history of charity in France. The results of this subscription to the *Figaro* have been a large increase in its circulation, and in its prestige among a class who formerly were not accustomed to hold a very light-mannered and loose-tongued newspaper in much esteem. Scarcely a day passes without some anecdote being published in the *Figaro*, which, were it printed in an English journal, would probably attract the earnest attention of Mr. Collette of the Society for the Suppression of Vice; yet I am given to understand that M. de Villemessant's vivacious print finds at present extensive favour among the provincial clergy.

I could very well understand why a *chasseur* in a plumed cocked hat, and holding a note in pink envelope in one of his buckskin-gloved hands, should be cooling his heels in the ante-



chamber. Madame la Marquise de Grand-Gomme had some request, no doubt, to make to the *Rédaction*. There was an old gentleman, again, in a black skull-cap, very comfortably bestowed in a corner, where he was sleeping the sleep of the just. Sleep on, harmless chucklehead; I have met you before, the whole world over. In theatres, in omnibuses, on board steamboats, at church, there is always the Man who Goes to Sleep. He is the lineal descendant of Eutychus. He is the living and snoring type of the obese Roman senator who indulged in forty winks while Messrs. Brutus, Cassius, Casca, & Co. were stabbing Cæsar to death at the base of Pompey's statue. While I glanced (not unsympathisingly) on the slumbering veteran—it is so nice to be asleep and to forget the world and other worries!—a Turk came in—the regular modern Turk, the “bottle of Bordeaux” Ottoman—his closely-buttoned black surtout representing the body of the bottle, and his fez the red-sealed cork thereof. His appearance there puzzled me but little. A miscellaneous gathering of humanity is scarcely complete without a Turk. There is always a Turk. There was one, Mr. Carlyle tells us, at the storming of the Bastille, and I should not be astonished to meet one at a Quakers' meeting.

I could not refrain from asking my courteous guide whether the *Rédaction* were troubled by any mad folks who came that way. “Yes,” he remarked, “the average was about half a lunatic in the course of every twenty-four hours.” The Archangel Gabriel generally calls on Mondays; Wednesday is the day for the gentleman in a straw hat with a blue ribbon, who has discovered Perpetual Motion; and he is usually succeeded on Fridays by a humpbacked individual in an olive-green cloak, who has ascertained, to his own complete and triumphant satisfaction, the feasibility of aerial navigation. The great-great-grandson of the Man in the Iron Mask only calls occasionally to ask for the address of the son of the Dauphin, Louis XVIII, and since the collapse of the Comte de Chambord's candidature nothing has been heard of the lady who declares she is Joan of Arc, and that she was burned, but got over it by means of electro-galvanism and the Eau de Lourdes.

My hosts would not suffer me to go away with-

out showing me the composing-rooms of the *Figaro*, of which I need only remark that they closely resembled some other composing-rooms with which I have been acquainted in the course of the last quarter of a century in the neighbourhood of the Strand and Fleet Street; and then, with great fear and trembling, I peeped into some apartments where a number of gentlemen were sitting at large, long tables, thickly scattered with newspapers and other documents. The gentlemen were busily employed in writing.



They were the Cyclops forging the bolts of Jove. These were the *chambres ardentes de la Rédaction*. For aught I could tell, I had been gazing momentarily on the profound *J. Mystère*, the inscrutable *Ignotus*, the enigmatical *Deux Aveugles*, the recondite *Masque de Fer*, the ineffable *Diplomat*, and the unapproachable *Monsieur de l'Orchestre* of this cunningly contrived and extremely clever paper.

I was requested, in departing, to look on a portrait of his Royal Highness the Prince of Wales; an excellent likeness, superbly framed, in the Hispano-Moresque *patio*. In the tapestry-hung chamber took place the famous nocturnal concert and banquet, concerning which so many absurd stories have been told. The Prince simply wished to see the steam-printing machinery of the *Figaro*, and that machinery was not to be seen in full action until long past midnight.

Similarly, in our own metropolis, princes and potentates occasionally turn up, in the small hours of the night, at the great newspaper-offices, to watch the presses in full blast. The *Rédaction* of the *Figaro*, true Frenchmen that they are, thought that they would combine a little festivity with the technical processes which the Prince was to inspect; so they got up a compact concert, in which some of the first artistes of the Parisian theatres were only too glad to co-operate, although they had been hard at work until midnight. The musical entertainment was followed by a supper, and his Royal Highness went away thoroughly delighted with the graceful hospitality which had been offered him. A precisely similar festival was got up, and with parallel success, a few nights since in honour of the two Russian Grand Dukes now in Paris.

I went away from this very convivial news-

paper-office most pleasantly impressed with all that I had seen; but when I had crossed to the other side of the Rue Drouot to take a final survey of the Hispano-Moresque façade and the bronze statue of Figaro, there flashed more wakefully than ever from the figure of the Barber that Eye at the existence of which, as an integral part of the *Figaro* installation, I have more than once hinted. The Eye had a surprising amount of Speculation in it; and ever and anon its lids seemed to be contracted to the narrowest dimensions, and to assume the semblance of a Wink. Its glances were articulate, and seemed to murmur confidentially, "We are perfectly aware of what we are about in this establishment, and in your next visit to our *Salle des Dépêches* you should ask to see our celebrated weasel. If he happens to be asleep, you may shave his eye brows *avec plaisir*."





DINNER-TIME IN PARIS

September 16



to subdue a tendency towards prejudice, and to avoid taking one-sided views of things, are among my most constant aspirations. It is quite possible that on a variety of topics I am unconsciously the bitterest of partisans; but at least I try my hardest to be impartial. Here have I now been, for many weeks, a Stranger and a Pilgrim in Paris, in circumstances almost totally different from any that I can remember to have been formerly subjected to in this metropolis. I have seen, designedly, scarcely anything of my own countrymen; I have lived almost altogether in the open air—I am writing this letter in a balcony; I have breakfasted and dined at a restaurant every day, and rarely twice at the same place; and I am continually asking myself whether I am right or wrong in the persuasion, which every day has been growing stronger within me, that the modern Parisians devote a great deal too much time every day to eating and drinking, and that, while the people seem to crowd the public eating-houses to a greater extent than ever, the Art of Cookery is slowly but surely deteriorating and degenerating among them. In the last respect I am glad to find my opinion shared by so high an authority as M. Abraham Dreyfus, who, in a remarkable article on Cooks and Cookery in the *XIXme Siècle*, points out that it is every day becoming more

difficult to obtain the services of really accomplished cooks, for the reason that first-rate chefs can always command much larger salaries in London, in Berlin, in Vienna, in St. Petersburg, in New York, and in San Francisco, than they can obtain in Paris; and that at the slightest reprimand which they receive from the *patrons* they threaten to "*rendre le tablier*"—which is the technical term for resigning. Again, the first-rate *chefs* plead that when they enter the service of a *restaurateur* whose customers are many and hungry the finest efforts of their art are, through the gluttony of the guests, ill understood, if understood at all. A not dissimilar complaint has been heard ere now from the *chef* of a London Club. "*A quoi bon*," he has pleaded, "is it for me to rack my invention to put eight fresh *entrées* in every day's *menu*, when out of an average of a hundred diners in the coffee-room seventy-five dine off a plain fish and the joint?" For a French cook to be misunderstood is the most unpardonable outrage that can be inflicted on him. "*Je lui ai composé*," said the great Carême bitterly of our George IV, "*une longe de veau en surprise. Il l'a mangée, mais il n'a pas su la comprendre.*" So the disgusted cook "*composed*" a last sauce, which he called "*La Dernière Pensée de Carême*," and retired from the Royal service. Had he remained at Carlton House a catastrophe as lugubrious as that of Vatel might have happened.

It is lamentable to learn, on the authority of M. Abraham Dreyfus, the opinion of a culinary artist, who, next to MM. Jules Gouffé and Urbain Dubois, is universally acknowledged to be the first *chef* in Europe, that the only remedy for the evils under which gastronomic France is suffering is the establishment of a Conservatoire Culinaire, or National School of Cookery. Imagine the Parisians, the nation of cooks *par excellence*, coming down to the complexion of South Kensington! Meanwhile, it is my intention to "take stock"—the expression is less metaphorical than technical—of the existing conditions of Public Cookery in Paris, premising that I am criticising that cookery quite apart from the *menu* of the clubs, of diplomacy, or that *haute cuisine bourgeoise* which you enjoy in French private houses, and of all of which I have seen in my time as much as most people. I shall be willing, again, to make due allowances for the exceptional pressure on all places of public entertainment in Paris caused by the Exhibition—a disturbing element which has enhanced the price and lowered the standard of excellence in every appliance of civilisation in this vast city. I need scarcely say that my acquaintance with the metropolis of France is not of the day before yesterday. It dates, indeed, from the midst of the reign of Louis Philippe, when Beauvilliar's and Hardy's had ceased, it is true, to exist, but when the chief and surpassingly excellent restaurants in Paris were the Trois Frères Provençaux, Very's, Vefour's, D'Ouix (the Café Corazza)—all in the Palais Royal; the Café de Paris, the Rocher de Cancale; the renowned restaurant in the Rue Neuve des Petits Champs, where Thackeray at the *Bouillabaisse*, and called for "the Chambertin with yellow seal"—Philippe's in the Rue Montorgeuil, and the Café Anglais. About the year '36, there was published a remarkable article on French gastronomy in the *Quarterly Review*, which, if I had it by me, would remind me of at least a dozen more equally good, albeit not quite so famous Parisian restaurants of the last generation; but those which I have mentioned enjoyed at the time of which I speak the highest prestige. As for Durand's, the Restaurant de la Madeleine, now one of the most fashionable and most expensive restaurants in Paris, I remember it in 1839 as an admirably provided

eating-house, to which a very near and dear relative of mine used to take her three children to dinner on their "days out" from school, *because the Restaurant de la Madeleine was so cheap!* They charged me sixteen francs for a roast pheasant—it was produced, it must be admitted, for a moment, *en évidence* as a *pièce montée*—at Durand's this very September.

Among the places I have named, the Trois Frères, Very's, the Rocher de Cancale, Philippe's, and the Café de Paris exist no longer. Since I have been sojourning in Paris I have dined or breakfasted at the following old and new places of popular resort: (1) The Café Anglais; (2) the Maison Dorée; (3) Bignon's (the Café de Foy); (4) the Café Riche; (5) the "Grand" Café; (6) the Restaurant Rougemont; (7) Vachette's (Brebant's); (8) the Café Veron, corner of the Boulevard and the Rue Vivienne; (9) "London House," a succursal of the same well-known establishment at Nice; (10) the Restaurant Bonefoy; (11) Vefour's; (12) the Restaurant d'Ouix, now the Café Corazza; (13) the Taverne Anglaise, in the Place Boieldieu; (14) the Restaurant Rousse, by the side of the Opéra Comique; (15) Gaillon's; (16) Voisin's; (17) Vian's; (18) Laurent's, in the Avenue Marigny, Champs Elysées; (19) Lucas's Taverne Anglaise; (20) the Café de la Paix; (21) a Restaurant Italien, close to the Passage des Panoramas; (22) Magny's, in the Rue Mazet, off the Rue Dauphine, "over the water," nearly in a line with the Pont Neuf; (23) the "Taverne Britannique," in the Rue Richelieu; and (24) a "fixed price" dinner in the Palais Royal, to whose exact whereabouts and whose precise name I decline to allude. In my memory it will be indelibly fixed as the "Dîner Burnand," because, when I emerged from the Trophonian caverns in which that dinner was served, I exclaimed, with the



celebrated art critic of the Grosvenor Gallery, "Joy, joy! but never again with you, Robin."

The Café Anglais still, to my thinking, maintains its place as the very best for dining purposes in Paris. You will dine well if you order one of the dishes specified in the bill of fare; but you will dine much better (if you know enough about French cookery to dismiss the *carte du jour* entirely from consideration) by ordering a dinner altogether "out of your own head." They will cook everything for you that is in season. Everything that should be hot will be "piping" hot—at very many pretentious places they give you that abominable thing, tepid soup; the fish is always fresh, and the cleanliness of everything is simply perfect. The prices are confessedly high, but they cannot be called extortionate. A very modest little dinner at the Café Anglais for two people of long experience, but moderate appetites and limited means, consisted of a dozen Marennes oysters, of goodly size and delicious flavour; *no fish* (I hold fish to be a surplusage when you have had more than three oysters); a *Crécy* soup; a *perdrix aux choux*—a tiny partridge braised with cabbage, carrots, and small sausages, some *gruyère* cheese, a *salade à la romaine*, and a bottle of the excellent Bordeaux wine called Pontet Canet. The partridge and cabbage cost ten francs, and the dish was dear at the price; but the Pontet Canet, which cost eight francs, was worth the money, and more, for it was so much velvet to the palate; and it had a flavour which reminded you at once of the odour of violets and the taste of raspberries. This dinner—stay, it included a *demi-tasse* of coffee and an undeniably authentic Havana cigar, the last an almost unattainable luxury in Paris*—cost twenty-eight francs and some centimes: with the waiter's fee, thirty francs; say twelve shillings a head. Now there is good *vin ordinaire* to be had at the Café Anglais for three francs—I am not quite sure that it is not two francs fifty—a bottle, and the average price of

an *entrée* is three francs and a half; thus you may set down our oysters, our *perdrix aux choux*, as so much reckless extravagance; but please to remember that a Frenchman, or even an Englishman, who had set his heart on having "a regular tip-top French dinner," even if he had suppressed the preliminary bivalves, would have thought his repast incomplete without a dish of fish, a *rôti*—say a *Chateaubriand* or an *entrecôte à la Bordelaise*; a sweet—say a *parfait au café* or a *soufflé de chocolat*; and some fruit.

The Frenchman would assuredly have taken a tiny glass of *fine champagne* cognac, chartreuse, or some other *liqueur*, with his *demi-tasse*; and the Englishman would, in all probability,



have wound up with at least half a bottle of Pommery Sec or Heidsieck's Dry Monopole. As for the French, it is with the extremist rarity that, save at Carnival time, or at a *repas de nocés*, they ever touch champagne, which is often alluded to contemptuously, as "*le vin des cocottes*," and more frequently, "*le vin des Allemands*." They are content to make it in order to sell it to the foreigner. Thus such a complete dinner as that which I have specified, at the Café Anglais, would cost at least twenty-five francs a head. Our own was incomplete, but to us sufficing. For the rest, a gentleman dining by himself would pay almost as much for a "complete" dinner as when he had a companion; and, as a rule, a party of six or eight will be called upon to expend less in proportion per head than would be disbursed by a party of three or four. An English exhibitor told me

* The sale of cigars at the Café Anglais is a speculation on the part of the waiters, who import the tobacco themselves from Havana, and share the profits. A *garçon* who is fortunate enough to be accepted as a member of the staff of the Café Anglais rarely quits it ("bar" death or other casualties) save to go into business on his own account.

that, with seven friends, he had enjoyed a really sumptuous banquet in a private *cabinet* at the Café Anglais, and that the bill only amounted to twenty-two francs a head. And I fancy that they must have had plenty of champagne. Of course you may ruin yourself at the Anglais if you like, and that with great promptitude and despatch. There are Lafittes and Margaux, there are (so I am told) Chambertins and Romanées, which are thought cheap at from thirty to fifty francs a bottle, and which are in extensive demand among the American clients of the house. I dined, indeed, the other evening with some old friends from New York at the Restaurant Rougemont, and we had Madeira of 1842 with the oysters. A pheasant was produced with his wings and tail spread, and with a kind of gold and jewelled *aureole* round his head; and—I did not ask to look at the bill. Had the dinner been a moderate one I might, for the purpose of comparison, have taken that liberty.

I may finally remark, touching the Café Anglais, that as a rule the service is irreproachable. The waiters are civil, quiet, and suggestive, and two or three of them speak English. The knives, forks, and spoons are all silver; yet, strange to say, the proprietor of this excellent establishment has not yet awakened to a sense of the expediency of providing his guests either with fish knives and forks, or with salt-spoons. The drawbacks to this very admirable house are, normally, in the smallness of the rooms, the low ceilings of which render them in summer nearly as hot as the *piombi* of Venice; and, abnormally, in the tremendous crowds of visitors brought by the Exhibition, and the clatter and *tapage* made by some of the foreign guests, whose nationality I will not particularise, at whose guttural gabble the English simply stare with stupefied amazement, while the few French gentlemen whom the guttural gabblers have not driven away sit silent in corners glowering with rage at the Invaders. They are as objectionable in Peace as in War. This is particularly the case on Sundays, when a Frenchman, having in all likelihood been to the races, is very fond of enjoying a good dinner. Unless he be one of a party, or has secured a *cabinet particulier* in advance, he will have considerable difficulty in making headway against this alien cohort,

who—men, women, and children—come six or eight strong, and virtually monopolise the public rooms. They are all gifted with enormous appetites, and they have an unquenchable thirst for champagne; so that I imagine that the Parisian



restaurateurs console themselves for the nuisance inflicted upon them by these turbulent (and upon occasion insolent) customers by making out the very biggest bills imaginable against them—casting up the highest possible *additions* and leaving it to the waiter to demonstrate that the total is both accurate and moderate. Especially do they “have” them in the way of fruit. Dessert, generally consisting, at this time of the year of grapes, peaches, and pears, is very costly indeed at the first-rate restaurants

The frugal Frenchman orders what fruit he desires—“une peche,” “une poire,” or “du raisin.” The improvident foreigner calls hoarsely for “tes vruits.” They bring him fruit with a vengeance—a whole *plâteau* heaped high with the gifts of Pomona. “Most boys,” sagely remarked Dr. Johnson, in the celebrated case of the alleged cause of Swift’s deafness in a youthful surfeit of fruit, “will eat as much as they can get.” But this foreigner’s voracity is the *restaurateur’s* opportunity. He watches the fruit disappear, and rubs his hands in mute joy. Do you remember the story of the old Duke of Norfolk—the Prince Regent’s Duke of Norfolk—and the cucumber? His Grace, who was wont to dress very shabbily, and who thought twice before washing himself, strolled late one evening in to the coffee-room of the Old

Hummums, in Covent Garden, and ordered dinner and a cucumber. It was the middle of winter. The waiter—he was a new one—mistrusting the looks of the guest, went to confer with the landlord. "There's that shabby old fellow," he said, "has ordered a cow-cumber, and you know, sir, that they're half a guinea apiece in the market." The landlord peeped round the corner of his little private hatch; recognised his customer; rubbed his hands, and said, softly smiling, to his servitor, "A cucumber, John? A cucumber? Yes John; *give him six.*" Cucumber is not a *primeur* in Paris at present; yet I am astonished at the want of energy among the Parisian *restaurateurs*, which has rendered them blind to the advantages of importing West India pine-apples. A fine "nubbly" pine, such as is dispensed on a London costermonger's barrow for a penny a slice, would be worth at least twenty francs in its entirety, or two francs a portion, at a boulevard restaurant.

Wenceslas Steinbock, the wayward husband in Balzac's *Cousine Bette*, is "taken by his sentiments" by one of his wife's relatives, just as he is about entering a forty-sous restaurant in the Palais Royal. He is, without much difficulty, persuaded to listen to the voice of reason and the pleadings of affection; and is ultimately led home, in a thorough state of penitence, to enjoy a succulent family dinner at the mansion of his mother-in-law Madame la Baronne Hulot. In all this behold yet another proof of the profound philosophy of Honoré de Balzac. It is precisely at the moment when a man is fumbling in his pocket for the necessary two francs—not without some sorrowful uncertainty as to whether he also is in possession of the necessary coppers for the *garçon*, for his coffee and his *petit verre* after dinner—it is just when he is gazing upwards on the illuminated ground-glass panel above the portal of the cheap restaurant kept by Gargottier *ainé*, or Boustifaille *jeune*, but is not quite sure as to whether the legend in crimson letters on the glass is "Déjeûners a f.1 25; dîners à f.2," or "Lasciate ogni speranza voi ch' entrate," that he is most liable to be successfully assailed by the sentimental side of his mental organisation, and to yield, after a decent simulation of reluctance (we try to humbug ourselves just as frequently as we try to

humbug other people), to an invitation to go and dine somewhere else. Not undesignedly have I quoted the *Inferno* with reference to the forty-sous restaurants. Does not the immortal Florentine tell us that there is no greater anguish than the remembrance, in misery, of the days when we were happy? One of the direct characteristics of the one-and-eightpenny repast is its being the caricature, the parody, the grotesque but effete phantom of a good dinner. Cardinal Mezzofanti remarked contemptuously (and quite unjustly) of modern Greek that it resembled the language of Plato and Demosthenes about as much as a monkey does a man. Thus in the number of its component parts the banquet provided by Gargottier *ainé* or Boustifaille *jeune* corresponds to the lordliest dinner that you could order at Bignon's or Durand's. For your forty sous you shall have *hors d'œuvres*, a *potage*, fish, an *entrée*, a roast, a vegetable, a sweet, salad, cheese, and dessert. But there the resemblance to the good dinner comes to an end. You are in a Shadowy Land, where "all things wear an aspect not their own." Somehow a fishy flavour gets into the bruised peach or the sleepy pear of the dessert; and it *must* have been *fromage de Brie* that you tasted just now in the chocolate cream. My own opinion is that it is "the gravy that does it;" and that the foundation of that gravy is something beyond mortal ken. The fish induces you to think that there are finny denizens of the deep as yet undiscovered by Mr. Frank Buckland; and as for



the meat—well, what was it that wicked Count Cenci gave his daughters to eat?—"the fevered flesh of buffaloes," or some such unholy viands? I have partaken of many strange meals; but there is a *je ne sais quoi* about some of the dishes at the cheap Paris restaurants altogether beyond my powers of definition or analysis.

I am not quite certain whether, to be strictly accurate, I ought not to speak of the forty-sous restaurant in the past tense. I am inclined to suspect that, since the opening of the Exhibition, Gargottier *ainé* has raised the price of his breakfasts to one franc seventy-five, and of his dinners to two francs fifty centimes; while a friend tells me that Boustifaille *jeune* has taken an even more heroic step. He has pasted slips of paper over his list of prices on the ground-glass panel; and when he has once got you into his lair he has you altogether at his mercy. On the other hand, the remarkable repast to which I have attached the name of "Le Dîner Burnand" is quite candid in its proclamation of tariff. Three francs for breakfast; five francs for dinner, including an ice and a bottle of Burgundy or Bordeaux; the wine, "susceptible of being replaced," at the discretion of the guest, by half a bottle of superior vintage. I have hinted that I tried the "Dîner Burnand." It was, not excepting a "Court" night at the hall of one of our civic companies, the most wire-drawn dinner to which I ever sat down; and yet there were no speeches, no glees, no songs. There was a little money-taker's box on the landing of the staircase leading from Galérie de Valois to the saloons of the "Dîner Burnand," and an elegantly-attired lady gave me, in exchange for my five francs, a large octagonal metal ticket with "Un Dîner" stamped upon it. That was enough to make you uncomfortable to begin with. Who likes to be badged and ticketed, and to be sent a-wandering through strange rooms with "Good for One Dinner" branded, so to speak, on his back?

The Administration, having got hold of your money, has no further personal interest in you. You are an encumbrance; and the Administration may be looking on peevishly while you are consuming your five francs' worth of victuals. "You just gnaw it out," said an American friend to me. The elegantly-dressed lady who took the

money was very stiff, and scarcely acknowledged the lowly salute which I made her. Had she been a *dame de comptoir* in a *restaurant à la carte* she would have been all bows and smiles both at the entrance and the departure of a guest. But, the Administration, having encashed my five francs, could no longer nourish any hopes concerning their customer. On the other hand, while the elegantly-attired lady was icily haughty, her cat, a huge creature, sitting majestically by the side of the till—a fat cat, with a tail as big as a fox's brush, and an Elizabethan ruff of feathery fur—regarded me from her amber eyes with a look, as it seemed to me, of comic commiseration. That grimalkin was evidently aware of *le fond des choses*. She had seen so many people coming up, so many going down, those fateful stairs. She was as the Clerk of the Arraigns at a Culinary Court of Oyer and Terminer, and may have been wishing me good deliverance.

The oldest waiters in Paris had seemingly been "laid on" to attend on the guests at the "Dîner Burnand" but that these ancient servants possessed, to all appearance, the proper complement of arms and legs, they might have been so many *vieux grognards* from the Hôtel des Invalides, in civilian garb, with their moustaches shaved off, and their medals stowed away in their trousers-pockets. I was waited upon by a *vieux de la vieille*, a veteran of the first line, who might—so old did he look—have been at Marengo when the historic *poulet* was first fried in oil, owing to Napoleon's cook being for the moment short of butter. Marengo! He looked old enough to have been the inventor of that Sauce Robert, the oldest of all known sauces for pork-chops, and which Mr. Dallas has ascertained to be a sauce of English origin, and to have been known to the *gourmets* of Chaucer's time. I hasten to admit that this patriarch waited upon us with much zeal and assiduity, and was particularly anxious to explain to us the extent of our rights and privileges in the matter of dinner. "You are entitled to yet another *hors d'œuvre*," he gently remarked, when I contented myself with a single sardine; "be not afraid; you may have butter and olives, radishes or sausage." He was quite scandalised when one of the ladies of our party declined



Grand Diner



Shopping at the Halles Centrales

the ice which he proffered her "*Pas de glace!*" he exclaimed; "*mais vous avez droit à une glace.*" Similarly he exhibited signs of the deepest dejection when we refused to have anything to do with the salad, which was as soft and clammy as cold boiled turnip-tops, and was dressed apparently with asafoetida and verjuice; and he was affected almost to tears when, unable to endure the lengthiness of the *Dîner Burnand* any longer, we rose to depart without partaking of any dessert. "*Vous partez,*" he murmured; "yet there remains a choice of four fruits. You are entitled to a peach or a pear, an apple or a grape. There are even figs." I say again that he was a most fatherly waiter; but, alas, he was semi-paralytic, and in spilling soup and sauce over the pantaloons of the public I have rarely seen his equal. He hobbled to and fro as quickly as his poor old feet would permit him; but apparently the kitchen was a very long way off, or the guests were too numerous, or he was too tired and so was fain to take a brief nap now



and then between the courses. In any case, when he went away he did not come back for a painfully prolonged period. We sat down at half-past seven, and it was a quarter to nine when we fled from the *Dîner Burnand*, leaving even then the dessert untasted. Had we grappled with the fruits I might have been sitting there now, perchance, "stiff as a broomstick," like the man in the German student's song.

Against the good faith of the Directors of the *Dîner Burnand* I have nothing whatever to say. They adhered literally to the letter of their

engagement. Everything that was in the bond—written in white paint on a black board at the entrance to the restaurant—was conscientiously provided. *Hors d'œuvres*, soup, fish, *entrée*, roast, vegetables, sweet, salad, ice, cheese, and dessert were all there; but they were all (to my taste) extremely nasty. Everything was equivocal, stale, and sodden. It was Nobody's fault, of course; nobody's but the *trop plein* of this overwhelming Exhibition. The rooms, already overheated by myriads of gas-burners, were crowded to suffocation; and the noise made by the guests was almost deafening. They vociferated among themselves; they shouted to the waiters, who were always bringing the wrong dishes; and then the waiters shouted to one another. There were numerous families of provincials—little removed from peasants, so it seemed by their costume—and in each large group there was generally a newly-married couple. Scenes of the liveliest altercation between bride and bridegroom were not unfrequent; and in some cases the elder folk had brought small children with them. Of course these brats over-ate; and then, "feeling bad," they began to yelp, and had to be taken out of the stifling oven of a place. How glad I was when the experience—abating the dessert—was at an end, and I descended the staircase of the *Dîner Burnand*! Suddenly there recurred to me that well-known passage in *Artemus Ward, his Book*, in which the two Mormon ladies informed the Immortal Showman that it had been revealed to them that they might enter his booth without paying. "Mebbe," replied Artemus; "but it has been revealed to me that you can pay without goin' in." Would that I had been content to depose my five francs at the money-taker's box of the *Dîner Burnand* without accepting in return the brazen symbol of wearisome servitude! As I passed the elegantly-attired lady, I noticed that she wholly failed to return my parting bow. I own that I was heavy at heart;



and my salutation may have been a gruesome one. But the cat was aware of me; and, from those eyes of amber which had already gleamed on me, there seemed to radiate, no longer facetious sympathy, but fiendish exultation. Where had I seen that before? Somewhere, I fancy, in the county of Cheshire.

One word as a moral and an apology. Everybody, it is to be hoped, is not so ill-conditioned, so hard to please, or so dyspeptic, as I may seem to be. I may have dined too often and too well; and, satiated with the masterpieces of the finest *cuisines* in civilisation, I may be yearning for my *premières amours*—for the “mutton chop with a curly tail,” and the “potato like a ball of flour”—I cannot help it. I cannot help having “seen the Show” both before and behind the scenes thereof, since the days when I tasted of the *mets* of Soyer and Francatelli, of Vidal and Roco-Vido, of Delmonico, and of the incomparable chef of the Brevoort House, New York, who always knew when his Excellency Lord Lyons was staying in the hotel from the exceptional tastefulness of the dinners selected from his bill of fare by the occupant of the suite of apartments on the first floor. “Milor Lyon he arrive,” the *chef* would remark to his roasting cook. “*Je vois là la main du maître.*” To vast numbers of very worthy people the Dîner Burnand may, I have not the slightest doubt, appear a very good dinner indeed; just as new St. Pancras Church, N.W., may seem a very sumptuous edifice to those who have not seen the Parthenon. The provincials at the Dîner Burnand

seemed in particular to relish their entertainments immensely. They enjoyed all their rights, and more. They demanded more sauce. They swooped down on all the *hors d'œuvres*. They asked for twice salad. They could not be made to understand that they were only entitled to choose two from the four fruits.

There was a party of English people close to us, comprising a clergyman in a beard and a wideawake-hat, a bride and bridegroom, a benign old maid, and two brawny little boys in turn-over collars whose delighted appreciation of the copious bill of fare was really comfortable and pleasant to view. The reverend gentleman in the wideawake pointed out that there was a choice between Burgundy and Bordeaux; and when they exchanged whole bottles of *petit bleu* for half-bottles of a darker and more astringent liquid, he sipped the stuff—the like of which may have been giving somebody else fearful qualms—as though it had been Chambertin or Clos Vougeot. The party were thoroughly happy. “Only fancy,” said the benign old maid, “ices and peaches, and macaroons with cream, too.” They will go back to their peaceful English homes and talk, many a time and oft, over the cold mutton and the rice-pudding, of the grand dinner they had in the Palais Royal. “Eight courses—eight distinct courses,” the benign spinster was never tired of repeating. What a pickthank, what a trouble-feast, what an ingrate, what a malevolent libeller, that simple party of English people might have thought me had I approached their



table and, unIntroduced and uninvited, imparted to them my opinion—an opinion to which I still steadfastly hold—that the pretentious, greasy, sloppy, soddened, mawkish meal was only the old two-franc dinner of Gargottier *ainé* or Boustifaille *jeune* promoted—always in consequence of the Exhibition—into a five-franc one.

Let me add, ere I quit the subject of the Palais Royal restaurants, that you may dine tolerably well, but very expensively, at Vefour's. If you order your dinner in the morning, and secure a *cabinet*, a really superior dinner, including wine, should not cost more than twenty francs a head. But beware, if you are dining downstairs at Vefour's, of ordering such a dish as *demi-selle de mouton pré-salé*, if you see it on the *carte du jour*. It is a delusion and a snare; and I fell into the snare myself a fortnight ago. I ordered the mutton. The waiter brought us three or four little cutlets of more than half-raw meat, weighing certainly less than nine ounces in all, and nine francs were charged for it. My memory must be failing me, else I should have remembered that in the spring of 1867 I fell into a similar springe, by ordering at this same Vefour's a dish of *flageolets*, or young haricot-beans. The *flageolets* were, it seemed, a *primeur*, or "spring novelty," in the way of vegetables, and I had to pay ten francs for a single portion of them. At the Café Corazza, once a first-rate house, the cookery has fallen off, the waiting is dilatory, but the prices are moderate. At the restaurant of the Galerie d'Orléans you may breakfast excellently well, and—but for the pressure of the Exhibition—comfortably. These are all restaurants *à la carte*.

With the lower class of "fixed price" houses—the inferior Gargottiers and Boustifailles that absolutely pullulate in the two great galleries—I should seriously advise you to have nothing whatever to do, unless you wish to pay an early visit to the pharmaceutical establishment of Mr. Roberts, English chemist, of the Rue de la Paix. As a rule, too, I would implore you likewise, if you value your health and peace of mind, to abstain from all salmon, from all sauces known as *mayonnaise*, *rémoulade*, *financière*, *Béarnaise*, or *Bordelaise*, in any but first-class restaurants. In second-class ones these sauces are not made with good butter, and they all mean

indigestion and bilious attacks. Especially should you beware of the preparations of shell-fish known as *moules à la marinière* and *moules à la poulette*. Mussels are at all times perilous things to eat; but you may partake of them with a tolerable certitude that they are fresh at Durand's or at the Maison Dorée. At other houses you run the risk of being—to use the common English locution—"musselled" to an alarming extent by stale and carelessly cleaned fish. The same remark will apply to the enormous *langoustes* or crayfish, and to the appetising little *écrevisses* or crawfish, of which, *en buisson*, boiled hot with a butter sauce, the French are so immoderately fond.

At the majority of restaurants—always in consequence of the Exhibition, I suppose—I have found the fish to have much more of an "ancient and fishlike flavour" than is desirable. At the Café Anglais and at the Restaurant Gaillon, however, I have invariably found the fish to be fresh—to use the proverbial expression—"as Paint." At most of the remaining restaurants, including even the grandest, it is frequently more than equivocal. It is but scant consolation for the habitual staleness of a most wholesome and delicious article of food that papers like the *Figaro*, the *Gaulois*, and the *Voltaire*, revel day after day, in extremely funny but, in the circumstances, exasperating stories about stale fish. Here is one: A customer at a boulevard restaurant complains, in distinctly audible tones, that his mackerel is absolutely uneatable. "S-sssh!" whispers the waiter, discreetly putting his fingers to his his lips. "It isn't the mackerel. *Pas le moins du monde*. It's the salmon of the gentleman opposite!" Another story is of a guest who complains on Wednesday that his turbot is not so good as that of which he partook on the preceding Sunday. "That's very odd," remarks the complacent *garçon*. "Really, I can't make it out; for it happens to be a slice of the very same turbot which was served to Monsieur on Sunday." This is only a clever paraphrase of the very old French Joe Miller about Jocrisse and the salmon. "I saw this morning," said Jocrisse (the French tomfool), "the finest salmon at Chevet's that I ever beheld in my life. I shall save up my pocket-money till I am able to buy it."

Peace and quiet and a sparseness of guests are to me among the essential components of a good dinner. One need not be such a gastro-nomic solitary as Handel the composer, who having ordered dinner for three at a tavern, and being asked by the waiter when the rest of the company were coming, tranquilly replied, "I am de gompany;" still I have an objection to sitting down to dinner with a hundred and fifty or two hundred people whom I do not know, and whom I have not the slightest desire to know, which may be done here any day at the crowded *tables d'hôte* of the Grand, the Louvre, or the new Hôtel Continental; and even more strongly do I object to being compelled to eat my meat to the music of the band of the Grenadier Guards discoursing a selection from *La Fille de Madame Angot*, or to the clatter of innumerable knives, forks, spoons, and plates, and the vociferations in a dozen languages of a horde of hungry people from all parts of the globe. There are no musical eating-houses in Paris, like our Holborn Restaurant, but the absence of harmony is compensated by the hideous discord which reigns around you while you are dining. The noise is almost as grievous in the *cabinets particuliers* as in the public rooms, since in the former poky little cupboards the atmosphere towards evening is usually so stifling that you are fain to open the windows, and then you are confronted by the incessant roar of the boulevards. Next to the excellent quality of the wines at Voisin's in the Rue St. Honoré, is the blessing of the comparative quietude of the street in which the house is situated; but the first-rate houses—the Anglais, the Riche, the Maison Dorée, Bignon's, Durand's—are all not only on the boulevard, but at the corner of boulevard streets; so that the bellowing catches you on all sides, without surcease or respite. The uproar prevailing in the Paris restaurants just now—always in consequence of the Exhibition—has become positively appalling. The *vacarme* of the house is only equalled by the *charivari* of the next; and you have simply a choice, so to speak, between marrow-bones and cleavers on the Boulevard des Capucines and frying-pans and tongs on the Boulevard des Italiens.

As regards breakfast, you have, it is true, a chance of relief. Take a victoria and hie straight

away to the Champs Elysées, and there you will be able to lunch peacefully and well. Laurent's, for example, in the Avenue Marigny, is, in the morning, a beautifully quiet house. It is close to the Cirque d'Été; but at the historic arena once known as Franconi's, no morning performances like those which take place at the Hippodrome are given. You hear no sounds more disturbing than the plashing of a fountain in the pretty garden surrounding the restaurant, and, now and again, a rippling of silvery laughter from the children on their hobby-horses at some distant merry-go-round. Laurent's itself is a trim little villa, gaily painted in the Pompeian style. It has a *souffçon* of the House of Pansa, or that of the Tragic Poet; but I hasten to say that there is one Pompeian house which the Restaurant Marigny does *not* resemble—the Hôtel Diomed, for instance, dearest and dirtiest of *alberghi*, maintained for the purpose of fleecing the *forestieri* who visit the disentombed city. Abutting on the façade of Laurent's there is quite a Bower of Bliss, open on two sides to the garden, and on a third to the interior of the



restaurant; and in this arbour you may regale yourself with an absence of noise and confusion eminently soothing to the nerves that have been shattered by that babbling, brawling Paris beyond the Place de la Concorde yonder.

We were served in the Bower of Bliss by an admirably civil and intelligent waiter, whose only fault was that, knowing a little English,

he was slightly too anxious to increase his knowledge of that tongue by propounding questions after the manner of the beneficent but somewhat irritating Ollendorff. As an atonement for this trifling fault, he caused to be brewed for us a pot of the very best tea that I have tasted since I have been in Paris. How is it that French people cannot make tea? Their tea warehouses are sumptuous to look upon, magnificently decorated, and crowded with rare porcelain and bronzes from China and Japan. I know one tea-shop in the Rue Vivienne where there are no less than seven slim-waisted young ladies behind the counter; still you cannot swallow bronze griffins or porcelain vases; and *demoiselles de magasin*, although delicious to the sight, are possibly difficult of digestion. When it comes to actual tea-drinking, you find yourself presented with a weak and well-nigh colourless infusion of you know not what mawkish and insipid herb. Assuredly it does not remind you of any Pekoe, Souchong, or Hyson with which you are acquainted. It must, however, be borne in mind that the French, as a nation, are still quite infants in the art of tea-drinking. I can well remember when it was the custom in good society in Paris to offer you a *petit verre* of *Rhum de la Jamaïque* with your cup of tea—the clown in the pantomime did no more when he “in his tea took brandy, but took a drop too much;” and one of the first dramatic pieces that I ever saw performed at a French theatre—it was just after the production of the inimitable *Ma Femme et mon Parapluie*—was a satire upon the then newly-introduced fashion of tea-drinking. It was a rollicking vaudeville called *Le Thé chez Madame Gibou*. The part of Madame Gibou, an old *portière*—there were no *concierges* in those days—was played by that admirable comedian Vernet; and the fun which he made out of the process of brewing some tea for the entertainment of some friends in the porter's lodge might have made the great Joey Grimaldi himself jealous. All kinds of strange ingredients were put into the teapot—some *bouillon* from the *pot au feu*, pepper, mustard, an onion, a glass of *cassis*; and finally the abominable broth was stirred up with a *bout de chandelle*—a tallow-candle end! I am afraid that the French have not improved to any

marked extent as tea-brewers since the time when this diverting farce set all Paris screaming with laughter. Do they boil their tea? Do they import the superior qualities of the article, or is it they grudge the necessary *quantum* of tea to the pot? In the matter of tea they seem to have been stationary. The herb has always been looked upon as an exotic, and it remains one. Not one French working man or woman in a thousand has ever, I apprehend, so much as tasted tea, which, indeed, is looked upon by the poor as a kind of *tisane* or diet drink, to be taken only during sickness.

We came away from the quiet breakfast at Laurent's enchanted with the beauty of the garden, the quietude of the Bower of Bliss, the succulence of the fare, and the moderate charge which was made for it. It was quite a model bill in the way of cheapness. Only seventy-five centimes for a pear. “You come, evening, dine,” quoted the Ollendorffian waiter as with many smiles he swept up his *pourboire*. “You come, evening, dinner in the garden. In the garden, you dine under the trees green. Over the green trees of the garden during the dinner of evening comes the illumination of the gas. Now I give you the hat and the umbrella. Have you his umbrella? (Lesson XIV). François, where is the umbrella of the English gentleman? Stay, I have the Cashmere shawl (it was only a Paisley one) of the English lady (Lesson XV). Good-bye; you come dine.” Good-bye Ollendorff. We made haste to get away, fearing lest in his ardour for linguistic improvement he should become still more Ollendorffian, and, asking us if we had the green boots of the Spanish captain, inform us that he himself possessed the pink ship of the Armenian muleteer.

So we strolled through the pretty garden, and by the murmuring fountain, and out into the always merry but tranquil Elysian Fields. Pleasant fields, lightly haunted by the apparitions of little children. There were many little manikins and toddlekins and *bébés* in the flesh gambolling under the trees that day. The sun shone very brightly. There were goat-chaises, and even goat *chairs-à-bancs*, about. The *Théâtre de Guignol* had attracted a large audience of small folk; the sweetstuff stalls were doing a prosperous trade; and there were distant symptoms of a



hare and tabor and of a dancing dog. But everything was quiet and subdued. The Champs Elysées are bordered by some of the handsomest private houses in Paris; and on week-days, by some curious tacit agreement among the classes, so it would seem, the place is the playground of the rich. On Sundays the mob comes, and the Champs Elysées roar. This afternoon the children, with their *bonnes*, had things all to themselves, and the showmen were as polite and affable as Mr. Cremer junior's young men, who go out conjuring to juvenile parties. I was quite surprised at the elegant attire and aristocratic mien of the little *demoiselles* of from eight, who patronised the wooden steeds of the merry-go-rounds. Silk stockings, embroidered slippers with high heels, *gants Jouvin* with three buttons, laced skirts, plumed and flowered hats of the newest mode, were common among these small ladies of fashion. There were a few *bourgeois* children in pinafores and blue-linen trousers; but they kept themselves aloof shrinkingly, and refrained from engaging hobby-horses when the cavalcade was a patrician one. I noticed one leader of fashion, aged about nine, who had a scent-bottle and a fan. She managed her fiery steed, notwithstanding these trifling encumbrances, with so much skill and dexterity; she pointed her small lance with so much adroitness when she passed the pendant circles—for a

French merry-go-round includes the game of skill of "running the ring;" she indulged in so many charming *minauderies*; she gave herself in a word—the little minx!—so many airs, that I fancied she must be cousin-german to the tiny aristocrat of seven, who, when asked to hold one handle of a skipping-rope in the Parc Monceaux, replied, with a toss of her head, "I only play with children who are dressed in velvet." The skipping-rope party were dressed in cotton. I was glad, however, to see when this superb young damsel descended from her charger that her stirrup was held by a muffin-faced boy in knickerbockers. They were velvet knickerbockers, mind you; and the edging to his cuffs and collars was of Brussels lace. I was still more glad to see la Princesse Toto and M. le Marquis de Petit Salé go off amicably to the nearest sweetstuff-stall to partake of barley-sugar; but I was pained subsequently to observe both of them engaged in a very fierce up-and-down fight over a penny-worth of gingerbread. The way in which M. le Marquis pummelled the Princess said little for the gallantry of juvenile Frenchmen; and the manner in which her Highness tugged at the hay-coloured ringlets of the muffin-faced Marquis was, to say the least, unladylike. Perhaps children are pretty much the same all the world over. *Qu'en dites vous?*

So I went strolling, strolling through the

beloved place, every pace of which to me was classic, and well-remembered, and some of it quietly sorrowful ground. And, as I wandered, the Elysian Fields became peopled to me with innumerable troops of small infantry—but with the little children who are dead. Hand in hand with one who these thirty years past has been in the grave, I recalled myself, a small boy, in the days of “skeleton” suits and frills—not those of knickerbockers—wandering in and wondering at these delightful Elysian Fields, ever full, to me, of fresh enchantments. What frenzied gambling for macaroons used to go on at the bagatelle-boards! What a conquering hero seemed the boy who propelled the ball into the luckiest hole, or struck the brazen bell, at the tinkling of which a little plaster statuette of Napoleon the Great would rise as by magic from a silent tomb of gingerbread and lollipops! The boy, generally a lanky youth *en quatrième*, had won the *grand prix*—usually a watch and chain of the purest tin lacquered yellow, or a flowery vase, warranted Sèvres, and worth about one franc fifty. We followed that proud prize-winner. We made much of him. We humbled ourselves before him. We extolled him to the



skies when he treated us to *coco*—a deliriously exciting beverage, composed of Spanish liquorice and sassafras—dispensed in tin cups by a man who carried the *coco* reservoir, a sort of Chinese pagoda, adorned with red-cotton velvet

and tricoloured flags, strapped to his back. Yes; these are the Elysian Fields. There, behind the canvas wall of the *Théâtre de Guignol*, I smoked my first cigar. It was very long and of a light-brown colour, and it cost a sou—one halfpenny sterling. The excruciating agonies of nausea which I suffered after half-a-dozen whiffs of that never-to-be-forgotten combination of cabbage leaf and brown paper should properly have cured me for ever and a day of any desire to indulge in the pernicious habit of smoking. But it failed to have that effect. There are people, I presume, who are fated to consume tobacco; and they must needs begin its consumption at some time or another.

Not far from the scene of my first dealings with nicotine, I found the well-remembered *Cirque d'Été*, now a very grand building indeed, but in my time a humble barn of circular form. The Brothers Franconi were then flourishing—twin emperors of the hippic ring. The famous Auriol, whose daughter married our much-regretted Flexmore, was down at Franconi's. The grandest of hippodramatic spectacles, generally treating of the martial episodes of the Napoleonic epoch, used to be performed there. The *Cirque* had a Napoleon of its own, second only to our Gomersal, a Blucher whom Cartlich might have studied with advantage; a Murat who was nearly as dashing, but not so elegant as Ducrow. *Moscow and the Passage of Beresina*; *La Corogne* (meaning Corunna), and the *Defeat of General Lord John Moore*; the *Campaign of Egypt and the Battle of the Pyramids*; *Austerlitz, or the Dog of the Regiment*; *Marengo, or the Two Vivandières*—these were the kind of pieces which they gave us at Franconi's in the brave days of old. Had I been dramatic censor under the Government of King Louis Philippe, I scarcely think that I would have licensed these hippodramatic apotheoses of the deeds of the Consulate and the Empire. They kept alive a very fascinating legend, a very dangerous *cultus*, among the masses. Psha! Louis Philippe's Ministers not only authorised, but conceived, organised, and triumphantly carried out a “hippodramatic spectacle” fifty times more perilous to Orleanism than the plays at Franconi's.

As I stroll through the Fields, calling up old

days, old scenes, old kindred and playmates long since dead, the temperature of the sunny September afternoon seems suddenly to grow bleak and chill and raw. It is November. As for myself, I have shrunk to very small proportions indeed; I have left the solid earth, and am astride on the conveniently strong bough of a leafless tree. The Champs Elysées, from the Arch of Triumph to the Place de la Concorde, are thronged by an innumerable multitude of people—black, silent, waiting for Something. The roadway is kept clear by serried lines of infantry and cavalry. Presently there is heard the distant thunder of drums; then come the distant wailing and sighing of a sea of martial music. Then, in the brumous distance, the head of a great procession begins to sway, glittering. It sweeps through the Arc de l'Etoile—*his* arch. The white roadway is gradually overspread, absorbed by a prodigious and splendid train, and at length the Something for which all have


been waiting looms in sight. All eyes are fixed on a huge funereal car, a lofty bier, a towering catafalque, the car drawn by steeds caparisoned from head to foot in black velvet, powdered with golden bees; and beneath the catafalque, patent to all eyes, is a coffin, on the lid of which is a Little Cocked Hat and a Sword. It is the sword of Austerlitz. They have brought back the ashes of Napoleon the Great, Emperor and King, from the Atlantic rock to bury him under the golden dome of the Invalides, on the banks of the Seine, among the French people whom he loved so well. A very dangerous hippodramatic spectacle, indeed! On the day of the performance Prince Louis Napoleon Bonaparte, nephew of the Illustrious Dead, was securely locked up in the prison of the Palace of the Luxembourg awaiting his trial for his madcap escapade at Boulogne. Twelve years afterwards he was Napoleon III, Emperor of the French.





IN THE HALLES CENTRALES

September 21

plendid weather overhead and crisp dryness under foot. A sky of cloudless blue, and sunshine of pale gold. The air clear and bracing. It is eight o'clock in the morning, and I am bound for the Halles Centrales. The Parisians of all classes (save the vicious) are extremely early risers and an astonishing amount of business is transacted before breakfast; still the streets at eight a.m. are not destitute of signs that the working day is still in its first youth. M. Barbédienne, my next-door neighbour, has just taken his shutters down; but his windows are not yet "dressed"—that, I believe, is the correct shop-walking term—and his nymphs and bathers in bronze are still enveloped in green-gauze veils, suggestive of the verdant *calzoni* which the prudish Bomba, King of Naples, forced the *ballerine* at the San Carlo to assume. As I pass the door of Brébant's restaurant, likewise known as Vachette's, I behold a curious spectacle. At least a hundred forlorn-looking creatures, men and women, young and old, and mere children, are standing *en queue* two and two against the wall which skirts the kitchens of the great restaurant. Eight o'clock in the morning is the time when M. Brébant gives away soup, made from all sorts of yesterday's leavings, to the poor; and his poverty-stricken guests may either sup

their pottage on the spot or take it home with them in the cans or the pipkins which they have brought. But very few members of the ragged regiment who form the "tail" are, I am told, can-and-pipkin-bringers. The majority drink their soup standing from a common porringer. They are outcasts, *gens sans aveu*, misérables who have no homes at all. The compassion extended to them should perhaps be of a modified kind. There are poor wretches who cannot work; these may be the lazy rascals who will not work. Still they may be pitied, even as we pity the "casuals" in Mr. Luke Fildes's picture. We must punish idleness and profligacy; but we may not pass sentence of death on the idle and the profligate. Starvation is equivalent to *sus: per coll:*

Down the Rue Montmartre, always noisy, always crowded, always business-like and bustling, and thoroughly French. "*Ici on ne parle pas Anglais*," they might write up here. I pass with temporary disdain the secondary *Marché de St. Joseph*; although I descry through its portals some admirable effects of light and shade and colour in the picturesquely grouped masses of fish, flesh, fowl, vegetables, and fruit. But I am bound on a grander expedition, and the *Marché de St. Joseph* must wait. Then I pass a shop which I am told is that of the largest game-dealer in Paris. I may not stop, since I shall

behold presently a wondrous assemblage of *gibier*, large and small. As I approach the Church of St. Eustache symptoms of the neighbourhood of a great market make themselves more and more apparent. The pavement becomes greasy and slippery with the tattered leaves of cabbages; porters laden with sacks hurry by you; you are jostled by *ménagères* carrying enormous market-baskets; and all at once you see a cascade of lemons tumbling bodily into the vaults of the old Gothic-Renaissance Church of St. Eustache. Since the abolition of intramural interments, the church-vaults have been utilised as warehouses for fruit; while in the thicknesses of the wall, so it seems, of the edifice itself there have been constructed a guard-house, a pastrycook's shop, and a cabaret. This mingling of the sacred and the profane gives a quaintly mediæval touch to the scene. Did not a pie-shop and a puppet-show impinge on one of the very chapels of Old St. Paul's?

Rounding the corner of the fine old fane, I came upon the perfectly modern series of edifices known as the Halles Centrales, and which are constructed, with the exception of a low skirting wall of brown stone from the Vosges, entirely of iron and glass. To be briefly technical, once for all, I may remark that the building (which was opened for business in 1858) covers an immense parallelogram comprising six pavilions, separated by six spacious covered avenues, one of them extending from the central boulevard to the Rue Pierre Lescot, while the two other avenues, which cross the first one at right angles, run from the Rue de Rambuteau to the Rue Berger. The pavilions—or “blocks,” as Anglo-Saxon architects would less elegantly call them—are devoted respectively to the sale of meat wholesale and retail, game, poultry, eggs, fruit, vegetables, butter, cheese, culinary utensils and crockeryware, sea and fresh water fish, and “jewelry.” Yes, there is a section—a very small one, it must be admitted—affected to the sale of *bijouterie*. I shall touch on the “jewel” department in the Halles Centrales last. Under the enormous structure are ranges of subterranean, where the operations of manipulating butter, counting eggs, plucking and trussing poultry and game, are carried on by gaslight. In 1870, just before the siege, millions of kilo-

grammes of potatoes were stowed away in these vaults, but their presence there was during many weeks unaccountably overlooked. When drowsy authority, feeling hungry at last, woke up, it was found that the great mass of the potatoes had rotted, and was totally unfit for food.

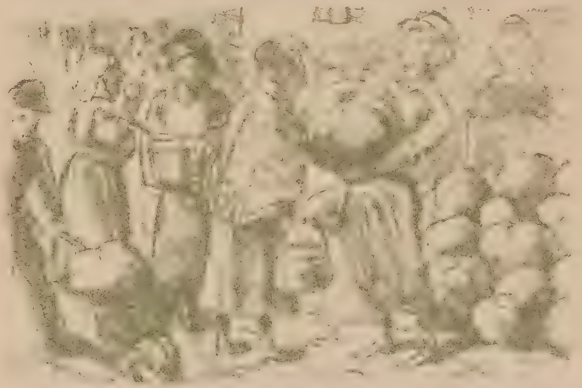
Potatoes are not the only things that have decayed hereabouts. Close by is the site of the old *Marché des Innocents*, which, until the advent of the Second Empire, fulfilled the purposes at present filled by the Halles Centrales. The Innocents forms now a handsome square, in the centre of which rises the magnificent Renaissance fountain built and decorated by Pierre Lescot and Jean Goujon. The edifice is contemporary with the defunct Tuileries, and within recent years has been judicially and tastefully restored. On the occasion of the formal opening of the markets in '58 the fountain ran with red wine for three-quarters of an hour, just as our conduit in Chepe used to do in bygone times. There was, however, a substantial railing round the fountain of the Innocents; and the police took care that only the *Forts de la Halle* and their lady-friends were permitted to swill the surging Macon. But I spoke of things which have decayed there—some millions of human bones, to wit. During six centuries the vast expanse was the Cemetery of the Innocents, but it was surrounded by covered arcades, beneath the pavement of which the remains of Royal and wealthy persons were interred. These arcades became fashionable walks. In process of time, sellers of toys and sweetmeats came to vend their wares there. The place grew into a bazaar, and the bazaar ultimately into a market. Towards the latter end of the eighteenth century the municipality, laudably anxious to enlarge the market, came to an understanding with the ecclesiastical authorities to remove the human bones which, by the million, were crumbling in the *Cimetière des Innocents*. The removal took place at night by torchlight, the relics of mortality being placed in covered wagons, escorted by troops of priests and monks chanting the Office for the dead. The market-space was thus considerably increased, but little was done to improve it structurally. I remember the *Marché des Innocents* very well indeed in Louis

Philippe's time, as a kind of forest of colossal canvas umbrellas outspread, and with the handles firmly fixed in the earth. Beneath these Brobdingnagian *parapluies* the ladies who dealt in fruit and vegetables did business. The old arcades had been replaced by modern galleries—somewhat resembling the “bulk shops” you see in old prints of Fleet Market and Butchers' Row, near Temple Bar—and which had been erected in 1813 by Napoleon I. That ruler had formed a grandiose scheme for remodelling the Halles; but the plan was destined to be postponed until the reign of Napoleon III, whose architects possessed the inestimable advantage of living in an epoch signalised by the wonderful structural invention of Joseph Paxton. It can scarcely be denied that the distribution—not the material—of Mr. Horace Jones's stately dead-meat and poultry markets in Smithfield may have been to some extent suggested by the *ordonnance* of the Halles Centrales; but it is altogether undeniable that the influence of the originator of the Crystal Palace is visible in every iron truss and girder and column, in every pane of glass, in the Halles.

So much for technicalities. I have not the slightest intention of making the round of the pavilions *seriatim* with you, or of describing in anything like detail the contents and the appearance of an emporium of food in comparison with which St. George's Market at Liverpool is a mere baby, and which can only be approached—and that at a vast distance—by the market at Philadelphia. Fully to describe the Halles Centrales would be, indeed, a task impossible of achievement, in this place at least, and in such restricted space as is at my command. The Halles Centrales form an *Exposition Universelle* of victuals. It is Grandgousier's larder. It is the Tom Tiddler's Ground of things eatable. It is the grandest “Grub Street” in Europe. Take and roll into one New Smithfield, Farringdon, Covent Garden, Billingsgate, Leadenhall, and the Borough; throw in the New Cut, Lambeth Marsh, and High Street, Camden Town, on a Saturday night, and the proportions of the Halles Centrales would not yet be reached. You might build an equally magnificent market in the very centre of London, My Lord Duke of Bedford; you might earn for your-

self fame as splendid and as enduring as that of Herodes Atticus, could your Grace be only brought to recognise the fact that structurally the paltry little collection of hovels called Covent Garden Market is a reproach to our civilisation and scandal to us as a nation.

The picturesque is not altogether absent from the Halles Centrales, all modern though they be. Entering the market from the Place St. Eustache, I found myself in the midst of a very wilderness of pumpkins, which the small *cultivateurs* from the villages around Paris are permitted to sell in the open air from break of day to nine a.m. After that hour the “pumpkin-eers” are rigidly moved on by the police. They are ridiculously cheap, a very fine pumpkin being obtainable for a franc, and seem to be used exclusively for soup-making among the *petit bourgeoisie* and by the working classes. I have never yet met with *potage de potiron* in the bill of fare of any restaurant; nor do the French cooks appear to have any idea of pumpkin in the form of custard or of a pie. Among the pumpkin dealers and their customers circulated



numbers of itinerant soup-sellers—the soup being *à l'oignon*, a racy, toothsome, and nourishing *potage*, but too inelegant to find a place in the menus of the Café Anglais or the Maison Dorée. Beyond the *soupe à l'oignon*, and a slice of bread now and then, with, perhaps, an occasional visit to a neighbouring *marchand de vins*, the market-people did not seem to require any refreshment. They had all had their morning coffee at six a.m., and about eleven they would breakfast seriously. Every Frenchman breakfasts seriously when he has any money. It is a ceremony which must be gone through *ab ovo usque ad malum*—from the omelet to the

apple or the pear or the grapes of the dessert. The consumption of fruit is thus much larger than it is with us; and the same, in degree, may be said of vegetables. A Frenchman does not hold himself as in duty bound to eat at least a pound of potatoes every day. We do. But no day passes without the Frenchman partaking at one meal, and generally at two, of pulse or green vegetables in his soup, as a *plat* or as salad. When we eat salad we generally eschew the mild and wholesome oil, and drench our green meat with bad vinegar, to the ruin of the flavour of the salad and the injury of the coats of our stomachs. The variety of the salad alone sold in the Halles Centrales is simply amazing. Of tomatoes, likewise, there is a splendid display. We are beginning at home slowly to recognise the culinary virtue of the "love apple" with its salutary sub-acid properties. Mr. Sergeant Buzfuz has made "chops and tomato sauce" immortal; but within recent years English people have found out that tomatoes are very good and wholesome, fried, stewed, baked, stuffed, and *au gratin*. Tomato soup is one of the finest of *purées*; and raw tomatoes sliced, with oil and vinegar, *à l'Américaine*, is a most succulent breakfast dish. In France every dish *à la Portugaise* is garnished with tomatoes, and "Portuguese" eggs are as delicious as "Portuguese" fowl and "Portuguese" cutlets; but the Parisian cooks have a bad habit of mingling shredded onion with tomato salad. The tomato has a distinct and independent flavour of its own, which needs neither enhancement nor diminution. What would you think of asparagus and onions? I question, even, whether mint with green peas be not a barbarism. Among the vegetables in the Halles Centrales not usually found in England, save, perhaps, in the Central Avenue of Covent Garden, where you can obtain everything that grows if you can afford to pay the price asked for it, I note *aubergines*—the American name for which is, I believe, "egg plant," but the English appellation of which has escaped me; I saw it the other day in an Anglo-French dictionary, but it was not a familiar name, and it fled from my mind—the black radish, as big as a large carrot, very pungent, and very good eating with bread and cheese; *salsifis* and *cardons*.

As for "strange meats," I observed with admiration in the game department a huge wild-boar, fresh killed, and which the dealer told me had been shot in the Ardennes. The last wild-boar I met in a continental market was in that behind the Pantheon at Rome. He came from the Pontine marshes, but he was only a poor little fellow compared with the formidable *aper* in the Halles. Venison, too, was abundant.



It is expensive; but the French are very fond of it. In London venison, with the exception of the haunch, is cheaper than butcher's meat. I have seen neck of venison offered at sixpence-halfpenny a pound. The common people won't eat it. We are a wonderful people. Frogs by the score, frogs by the hundred, ready skinned and trussed and spitted, were plentiful in the Halles. I ate some once at a dinner in London of the Acclimatisation Society. They were *en fricassé* with a white sauce; but so far as flavour went they presented no definite purport or significance to my palate. An obliging French friend, a confirmed frog-eater, tells me that the diminutive creature who once a-wooing went, contrary to the advice of his mamma, with his Roley Poley, Gammon, and Spinach, and who was an immediate factor in the discovery of galvanism, is truly delicious fried, with parsley. My friend bought three dozen this morning for the family breakfast. He told the dealer that he would send his chef to fetch them by and by, jokingly telling her not to eat them all in the mean time. "Y

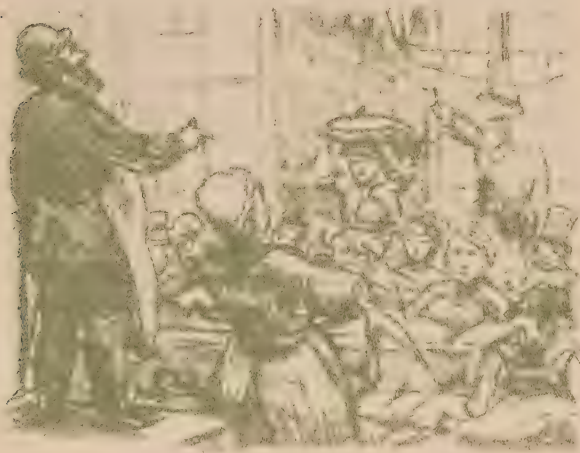
a pas de danger," quoth Madame la Grenouillère. "*Jamas de la vie je ne mangerais de cette volaille-là. Peuh! une pourriture, allez!*" So you see that the prejudice against frog-eating is not confined to England. Snail soup, however, I have heard of as recommended by English physicians for consumptive patients; but in France the *colimaçon*, or rather the *escargot*, is habitually eaten, stewed, with a stuffing of *finest herbes*. There used many years ago to be, near the top of the Rue St. Honoré, where the district of the Halles begins, a restaurant by the sign of Les Cent Mille Escargots. Horrid reminiscence! And yet we eat periwinkles. I am glad to know that we do not eat squirrels; and I was heartily sorry to see a brace of these beautiful and harmless little nutcrackers exposed for sale this morning in the game department. Well, we eat "the merry brown hare" and the inoffensive, albeit idiotic, rabbit. As for the thousands of quails and larks to be found in this part of the Halles, and which are brought, they tell me, from North Africa, it would be better, perhaps, to say nothing of a sentimental nature. Those small fowl are such very nice eating.

But touching that "jewelry" department in the Halles Centrales of which I spoke anon. My conductor, the most obliging of Frenchmen, amicably insisted that the "Section de la Bijouterie" should be the very last visited in our survey of the Great Central Market of Paris. "*C'est très drôle à voir*," quoth he. As a rule, I do not care about staring at gems. I do like to ponder over the sovereigns and napoleons, the doubloons and ducats, the dollars and roubles, in the windows of the money-changers' shops in the Palais Royal, because I have had a good deal of gold and silver dross in my time; and it is better to have loved and lost than never to have loved at all. But I shall never possess any diamonds; and I prefer a dozen of oysters—Marennes are the best—to all the pearls at Mellerio's, in the Rue de la Paix. Stick a bit of foil paper at the back of glass symmetrically cut into facets, and you may at once provide yourself with a ruby or an emerald. Let others pine for coral. I can make a very fair imitation of the ruddy polype with gum tragacanth and vermilion. What is coral, after all, but so much cartilaginous matter combined with carbonate

and phosphate of lime? On the whole, to most of the gewgaws in which some people take so much delight, there may be applied the scathing remarks on gay wearing-apparel in Swift's *Letter to a Very Young Married Lady*: "In your own heart," writes the Dean, "I wish you to be an utter contemner of all distinctions which a finer petticoat can give you; because it neither makes you richer, handsomer, younger, better-natured, more virtuous, nor wiser than if it hung upon a peg." The profound philosophy of Swift might in this instance, perhaps, be supplemented by the apologue of the fox that had lost his tail. It was a cousin of his who found the grapes so sour.

"Jewelry in the Halles," thought I, as we hastened through the interesting but somewhat overpoweringly odorous Cheese Department, in which the lordly Camembert, the unpretending but delicious Brie, the milky Bondon, the porous Gruyère, the leather-skinned Port-de-Salut—the last a *fromage pratiquant*, or orthodox cheese, stamped with pious emblems—contend for pre-eminence with the mighty Roquefort—*le fromage qui marche*, as the French significantly call it from its tendency to spontaneous locomotion when kept too long. In England Roquefort has nearly killed our own Stilton; but the victor has a formidable rival in the Italian Gorgonzola, a cheese almost unknown in France. "Jewelry in the Halles," I repeated. "Of what kind could those baubles be? Cheap brooches and earrings for the daughter of Madame Angot, silver crosses for the *Dames de la Halle*?" I asked of my conductor. He laughed and told me that I should see the brooches and earrings presently. So we passed from the cheeses to the corridors allotted to fresh and sea water fish, where all kinds of finny food were being sold, as in our own Billingsgate, by auction. The same means are adopted of disposing of nearly the whole of the produce brought to the Halles; but in a few instances, eggs and butter for example, the *vente à la criée* is superseded by the *vente à l'amiable*—an amicable arrangement between vendor and purchaser. The auction sales are very well managed; a tramway running the length of the stalls carrying a platform which supports the auctioneer's rostrum, and the auctioneer and the *crieur*, the man who does the bawling part

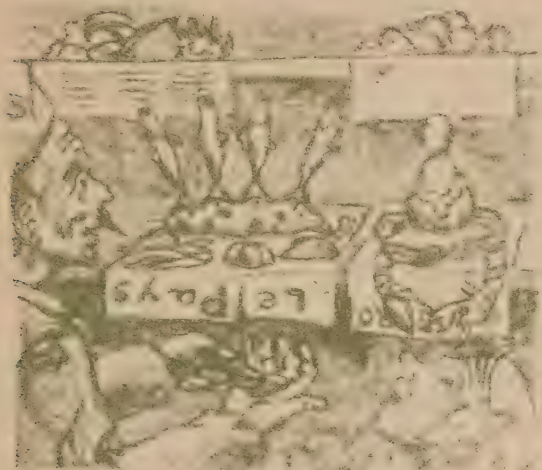
of the business. The seller holds his tongue; but brings down his hammer at the final bid, and then enters the sale in the ledger before him. Among the fish I desried two or three noble sturgeon. These are *poissons de représentation* or "show-fish," and are generally purchased by the proprietors of "so much a head" restaurants to decorate their *devantures*, in company with the biggest asparagus, the hugest *langoustes*—I use the French word because I cannot yet make out whether a *langouste* is a crayfish and an *écrevisse* a crawfish, or *vice versa*—some piscatorial authorities tell me one thing, and some another—and the most blushing tomatoes in or out of season. The sight of these dainties, artistically displayed in the glass cases which flank the *restaurateur's* door, dazzles the eye of the Parisian in quest of a dinner at "so much a head," but who has not quite made up his mind as to the particular establishment which he shall patronise. The royal sturgeon or the colossal asparagus vanquishes him in the end; and he ascends the fatal stairs and feeds. Chevet's in the Palais Royal, close to the Galérie d'Orléans, used to be famous, in days of yore, for its "show fish;" but since the *restaurateurs à tant par tête* adopted this obviously attractive means of advertising their wares, Chevet—the Fortnum and Mason of Paris, as Potel and Chabot are its Morel—relinquished the display of "sensational" provisions. It was Bilboquet in the farce who used to say, some forty years since, that he had seen that morning a wonderfully fine salmon at Chevet's, and that he intended to save up his pocket-money until he was able to purchase the splendid fish.



Here is the "jewelry" at last. We pass between a double line of stalls heaped high with the most astonishing array of cooked food that I have ever set eyes upon. Fish, flesh, fowl, vegetables, fruit, pastry, confectionery, and cheese are all represented here, ready cooked, but cold, and arranged, not on plates or dishes, but on quarter-sheets of old newspapers. Imagine one pile, consisting of the leg of a partridge, the remnants of an omelette, the tail of a fried sole, two ribs of jugged hare, a spoonful of haricot beans, a scrap of *filet*, a cut pear, a handful of salad, a slice of tomato, and a dab of jelly. It is the microcosm of a good dinner, abating the soup. The pile constitutes a *portion*, and is to be bought for five sous, or twopence-halfpenny. There are *portions* as low as two sous; indeed the scale of prices is most elastic in ascending and descending. There are piles here to suit all pockets. Are your funds at a very low ebb, indeed? On that scrap of a back number of the *Figaro* you will find a hard-boiled egg, the gizzard of a fowl, two pickled gherkins, and a macaroon. A breakfast for a Prince, if his Highness be impecunious. Are you somewhat in cash? Behold, outspread on a trenchant leading article from the *République Française*, a whole veal chop, a golden store of cold fried potatoes, an artichoke *à la barigoule*, a sumptuous piece of Roquefort, some *barbe de capucin* salad, and the remains of a *Charlotte russe*. A luncheon for a King, if his Majesty's civil list be a restricted one. But there are loftier luxuries to be had. Behold an entire fowl. See at least the moiety of a *Châteaubriand aux champignons*. Yonder are the magnificent relics of a *demie-selle de pré salé*, the remains of a *sole à la Normande*, the ruins of a *buisson d'écrevisses*, half a dozen smelts, the backbone of a pheasant, and upon my word, some truffles; yes, positively, truffles. It is true that they are mingled with bits of cheese and beetroot, with a dash of *meringue à la crème*, and a suspicion of *sauce Robert*. All this is gathered together on the front page of the *Pays*. A dinner for an Emperor, when Imperialism is at a discount, and Cæsar does not find it convenient to dine at the Café Riche or the Maison Dorée.

And yet it is precisely from establishments of the kind just named that the heterogeneous

portions come. An erroneous idea has long prevailed that the cheap eating-house keepers in the Palais Royal are dealers in *crambe recoccta*, and that their larders are largely supplied from the "leavings" of the great Boulevard restaur-



ants, which are hashed up again for the benefit of the one-franc seventy-five and the forty-sous customers. Nothing whatever of the kind is the case. The cheap *restaurateurs* may purchase meat of the second category, lean instead of plump poultry, game that is a little too far gone to suit aristocratic palates—the French epicure abhors game when it is "high," and fish which is not quite in its vernal prime of freshness; and, as regards butter especially, there is certainly a difference between the quality of the article used in the first-rate *cuisines* and that employed in the second and third-rate ones; but for the rest, dear and cheap restaurant proprietors go mainly to the same market. It is the same *portion* of fried potatoes for which you pay five sous at an *établissement de bouillon*, and for which one franc seventy-five centimes are extorted at the Café Lucullus or the Restaurant des Grands Gommeaux. The cheap eating-houses have few "leavings" to dispose of. Their guests are generally too hungry to leave anything on their plates; and, if aught, indeed, remains, it is devoured by the scullions and *gâte-sauces*, or is manipulated by the *chef*, who should be an adept in the "art d'accommoder les restes." The fragments which form the "jewelry" of the Halles Centrales are brought down in big baskets, between seven and eight every morning, by the *garçons* of the great Boulevard restaurants, or by the *larbins* from the

hotels of the Ministers and foreign Ambassadors. If there have been overnight a dinner at the Ministry of the Interior or at the Baratarian Embassy, the show of "jewelry" in the morning will be superb. Whole turkeys and capons, all but entire hams and *hures de sanglier* scarcely impinged upon, *pièces montées*, the majestic vestiges of a *poulet à la Marengo* or a *saumon à la Chambord*, will decorate the deal boards of the stalls in the Halles. Out of the fashionable season the supply comes principally from the leading restaurants, where the "leavings" are the perquisites of the *garçons*. Whether the proprietors levy any tolls on the proceeds accruing from the sale of this astonishing *omnium gatherum*, this *macédoine*, this *pot-pourri*, this *salmagundi*, this *galimatias* of edible odds and ends, I do not know; but, so far as my inquiries have extended, I incline to the belief that the fragments become the property of the *garçons*, in frank-almoign, and go to swell the aggregate sum in the *tronc* or money-box vase on the restaurant counter into which all the fees received by the waiters are cast, to be divided at the end of every month in equitably proportionate shares among all the servants of the establishment—from the lofty *premier garçon*, who will be a *maitre d'hôtel* soon, and who may become a *patron* some of these days, to the lowliest *marmiton* in the regions below.

The "jewelry" is not sold by auction. The sales are always *à l'amiable*; and there are some dealers who have yearly contracts for the "leavings" of a particular restaurant. So soon as the merchandise has been received at the Halle the dealers—nearly always women—proceed to arrange it for sale; and this arrangement is, to all intents and purposes, an art. The *marchande de bijouterie* has a twofold object in view. First, she wishes to make a very little seem like a great deal; and, next, she is desirous to make the *portions* look as attractive to the eye as possible. Some *marchandes*, fortunate enough to possess the sentiment of artistic beauty, make up their own *portions*; others engage the services of a *metteur en œuvre* or a *donneur de coup d'œil*—the great jewellers of the Rue de la Paix can only do as much—to give the portions the requisite infusion of the picturesque in the way of composition and colour. These *metteurs en*

œuvre are a kind of professors of culinary peripatetics, flitting from stall to stall, and giving here a dash of green, in the shape of some spinach or a *chou de Bruxelles*, or a touch of red in the way of a carrot or a tomato, to a *portion* the hues of which seem too monotonous in tone. A high light is needed there. Quick! the fat of a mutton-chop, the white of an egg, or a morsel of *blancmange* supplies the deficiency. Is not yonder heap somewhat feeble and unsubstantial in appearance? Swiftly the *donneur de coup d'œil*, by the artful introduction of the deep crimson of beetroot, the Vandyck brown of an *entre-côte*, or the mellow tawny of the crust of a raised pie, imparts strength and richness to the whole; and the *étalage* of "jewelry" is complete.

The purchasers are the Quiet Poor, the people who are ashamed to beg, and who, but for the merciful cheapness of these toothsome scraps,

would not taste meat from month's end to month's end. To watch the decent but wretchedly-clad people, men, women, and children, critically examining this "jewelry" for the indigent—jewelry to be worn inside instead of outside the stomach—to watch them slowly passing from stall to stall and turning over the coppers in their hands before they made their final choice; to watch them at last going off with the newspaper-enwrapped parcels, and with just a gleam of tranquil satisfaction in their wan, pinched faces, was more than curious, more than interesting. It was inexpressibly pathetic. Could I persuade a member of the Charity Organisation Society to accompany me to the jewelry department in the Halles Centrales between eight and nine o'clock in the morning, I will wager that in less than five minutes I would get twice that number of francs out of him to treat the poor, decent, thinly-clad folks to *portions* withal.





Waterside Washerwomen



Bookworms of the Quai d'Orsay



THE GHOST OF THE GRISETTE

September 23



What has become of the Parisian Grisette? Paris, we all know, is a city of ephemera; but the grisette should not be considered as an evanescent personage—for La Fontaine, in some of the daintiest stanzas that French poet ever penned, sang her praises more than two hundred years ago; and in my own Parisian adolescence I was habitually and pleasantly aware of the grisette. The good-tempered, saucy, hard-working, harmless little body! How fond she was of flowers; how she stinted herself in her own scant rations to feed her much-prized cat; how she went without sugar to her own coffee in order that the due lump might be thrust through the bars of the cage of her pet canary! Few sorrows had she of her own, that little grisette, when her work was not slack, and she could get enough to eat. *Elle se contentait de peu*. Her coffee and plenty of milk—O, she must have plenty of milk!—in the morning; a hunk of bread, a bunch of grapes, a morsel of *fromage de Brie*—the Stilton of the poor—for breakfast; and for dinner the *pot au feu*—but little more than so much hot water, flavoured with a little fat and some vegetables—and bread, with perhaps an apple or a pear. She was content with little. A pennyworth of fried potatoes from that well-remembered stall on the Pont Neuf—there are no stalls on the Pont Neuf

now—or threehalfpenny-worth of ready boiled spinach, strained and pressed so smooth that it looked in the *fruitier's* window like so much green paint, were quite a feast to her; but on high days and holidays she regaled herself with some tiny kickshaws of *charcuterie*. Butcher's meat she scarcely ever tasted. If she had a little money left after the *stricte nécessaire* had been provided for, she regaled herself with roasted chestnuts, or with a slice of that incomparably greasy and toothsome *galette* which they used to sell at an open-fronted shop in the Place de l'Odéon—a *galette* which, without fear of contradiction, I contend to have been more succulent than the flimsier and higher-priced article sold at the *Renommée de la Galette* on the other side of the water.

The grisette was as fond of *galettes* as London boys are of the peculiar form of suety pudding with plums in it known as "Spotted Corey." Not "Spotted Duff," mind you; that is quite another *eidos* of the pudding species. Amateurs consider it all the more delicious for a soupçon of pork-gravy, and the most "lumping" pennyworth of the dainty is to be obtained at a shop in Long Acre. The grisette took a tidy modicum of wine, largely diluted with water, at her breakfast and her dinner—a teetotal Frenchman or Frenchwoman would be regarded as next door to a lunatic; but in those days a very decent

ordinaire, either of Bordeaux or Burgundy, was to be had, costing ten sous the litre—a quantity slightly under an imperial quart. At present a litre of the vilest *petit bleu* cannot be obtained at the *marchands de vins* for less than sixteen sous. Formerly outside the *octroi* barriers quite drinkable wine was to be had for four sous the quart; and the halcyon time of cheapness is commemorated in a song beginning,

“ Pour éviter la rage
De la femme dont je suis l'époux,
Je trouve dans le vin à quat' sous
L'espérance du veuvage.
Venez, venez, sages et fous,
Venez, venez, boire avec nous
Le vin à quat' sous.”

The song is sung no longer, and the *guingettes* where the wine at four sous used to be sold have been pulled down; and the *octroi* barriers have been enlarged to give Paris more elbow-room, huge blocks of houses five stories high have been erected in the place of the humble but joyous little taverns, where on Sundays and fête-days, the *grisettes* and their sweethearts came to enjoy themselves, and to dance to such strains as those discoursed by the king of itinerant fiddlers, the *Ménétrier de Meudon*. Pleasant little *guingettes*. You fancied that the bonny, buxom hostess sitting behind the counter was “Madame Gregoire;” that it was the “Petit Homme Gris” who had just ordered another *chopine*; and that it was the “Gros Roger Bontemps” who was playing at *tonneaux* in the garden with Lisette.

Aye, it was the Empress-Queen of all *grisettes*, descended in right line from her whom La Fontaine limned. It was the unsurpassable Lisette of Béranger, who was yet extant some five-and-thirty years ago in Paris. It was then that Albert Smith, who had been a medical student in Paris, marked the *grisette* as pretty and pleasant, and noticed that her highest ambition in the way of dress was to possess half a dozen pair of white thread stockings of English manufacture. Some years were to elapse before Mr. Cobden and the Treaty of Commerce gave facilities to the *grisette* for gratifying her ambition in the direction just hinted at; but by that time there were very few *grisettes* left to covet stockings of white thread, Nottingham or Glasgow made; and the *grisette*'s successors on the

other side of the Seine were apter to hanker after hose of pink or pearly-gray silk. The *grisette* never wore a bonnet; no, not even on Sundays. She had her own particular, peculiar, characteristic, picturesque and becoming cap. Her manner of walking was matchlessly graceful and agile. The narrow streets of old Paris were, in those days, infamously paved. There was no foot pavement. The kennel was often in the centre of the street, and down it rolled a great black torrent of impurities fearsome to sight and smell. There was no gas when I first saw Lutetia, save in the Place de la Concorde, in the Palais Royal, and on the Boulevard des Italiens. The remainder of the streets were lit by means of *réverbères*—oil lamps suspended from ropes slung from house to house across the street.



The manner in which the *grisette* would pick her way over the jagged stones, and the dexterity with which she would avoid soiling her neat shoes and stockings when venturing on the very brink of that crashing, plashing kennel, were wondrous and delightful to view. She had an inimitable way, too, of whisking the end of her skirt over her arm as she trotted along, and she was similarly nimble in ascending and descending the steep, hideously dark, dilapidated, and dirty staircases of the old lodging-houses of the *Quartier Latin*. Were you ever taken to a certain tall, dingy house in the Rue de l'Ecole de Médecine, to see the room in which Marat was stabbed to death in his bath? I went there once; but the room was in the occupation of a Polish exile, who had invented a machine for hatching chickens by electricity, and who would

not permit us to enter his domicile. Perhaps it was full of eggs; and possibly he cared no more about his apartment having been the deathplace of Marat than Mr. Toole in the farce cared about his second-floor back having been the birthplace of Podgers. But as I came, disappointed, down the dingy staircase, slippery, rickety, evil-smelling, there passed by me in the gloom an Apparition in white. It seemed to float upwards, and disappeared. With my head full of the terrible tragedy in which the modern Judith slew the Holofernes of the Terror, it was as though the Presentment of Charlotte Corday has just passed by; but lo! from the regions beneath came the hoarse voice of the concierge crying, "Mademoiselle Amanda, vous avez oublié votre clef;" and speedily there came tripping down a pretty little lass with blue eyes and brown hair, in a coquettish white cap, and a frock of printed calico. Who wears "frocks," or even "gowns," nowadays? The modern grisette wears, I suppose, a "robe" or a "costume." Mademoiselle Amanda was only a little grisette who lived in a garret *au cinquième* in that terrible house of Marat. She was a waistcoat maker, the communicative concierge—concierges were *portières* in those days—told us, and earned no less than one franc seventy-five centimes a day. "*C'est une brave fille qui se contente de peu,*" quoth the concierge.

Was she virtuous? Well, it may be that, in the important aspect in question, she was, as in other matters, content with a little. Albert Smith, who was on innocently intimate terms with the grisette, who had danced with her and treated her to *marrons chauds* and *bière de Mars*, had not a word to say against her morality. In Eugène Sue's *Mysteries of Paris*, Rigolette, the grisette, and Germain, the notary's clerk, whom she eventually marries, are nearly the only virtuous personages among a horde of male and female villains belonging to all ranks of society. But Albert Smith was writing for English magazine readers, and the *Mysteries of Paris* is a romance. Béranger must ever be held as the supreme authority touching the ethics of the grisette; and the moral character of Lisette, as painted by the illustrious *chansonnier*, certainly, from time to time, leaves something to be desired. Still Béranger is careful to draw a tangible distinction between his beloved Lisette and Fretillon, "*la bonne fille,*" to say nothing of "*ces demoiselles,*" who, in 1815, uttered the famous *complainte*,

"Faut que Lor Vilainton ait tout pris;
G'na plus d'argent dans c'geux de Paris."

I apprehend that the grisette of thirty years ago was as virtuous as circumstances would allow her to be. In the majority of cases she was an orphan—or worse than an orphan, a *pauvre enfant délaissée*—who had never known father or mother, who had no kith or kin whatever, who, as a baby, had been flung into one of the *tours* of the Foundling Hospital, or had been picked up on the muddy pavement of the quays, destitute, abandoned, helpless, to be grudgingly brought up at the public expense in a prison-like asylum, to be turned out on the great world when she was sixteen years of age, with a few scores of francs and a bare-livelihood-getting skill in needlework. If she could keep body and soul together honestly, she did so. She remained a *brave fille*, a model of "*conduite sage et réglée*" to her *propriétaire* and her concierge. If she went wrong it was not very far in this direction: not farther than is glanced at in Henri Mürger's *Scènes de la Vie Bohème*.

She made no part of the systematic and heartless profligacy of Boulevard Paris. She knew



nothing about the *Maison Dorée*, and was certainly never seen in a pony Phaeton in the Bois de Boulogne, or on the box-seat of a four-in-hand or in a barouche à huit ressorts, at the Courses Longchamps. She was neither a "Lorette," a "Cocotte," a "Fille de Marbre," a "Fille de Plâtre," a "Demi-Mondaine," a "Ceinture Dorée," a "Belle Petite," nor a "Grosse Dormeuse." "Une Grosse Dormeuse," the latest variety of the *hetairæ* species, is an actress at one of the minor theatres, the value of whose personal property in diamonds exceeds, to an incalculable extent, the amount of her monthly salary. Diamonds! Lise, or Amanda, or Rigolette had not seen a diamond bracelet

half a dozen times in the course of her life, and then it was in a jeweller's shop-window in the Rue de la Paix. From the beginning until the end of the chapter she was a *Grisette*—nothing more and nothing less—and I want to know what has become of her. Up to the present in New and Regenerated Paris, I have only met with her tawdry, haggard, and fitful ghost in an extravagant toilette, very high-heeled shoes with brass tips, and visage much be-plastered with white and red paint. Can this be Rigolette? Can this be Amanda, "*la brave fille*," who earned one franc seventy-five a day, and was content with little? Can this be Lisette?





THROUGH THE PASSAGES

October 7



What am I to do? I have a letter to write to-day, and I cannot write while Baptiste is pottering about with brooms and watering-cans. I cannot spare time to go to the Exhibition. I have just emerged from the Café Véron, where I have breakfasted—a quiet, respectable, substantial establishment is this Café Véron, much frequented by Italians, and the proprietor of which has had the good sense and the good taste not to touch, save with timeous soap and water, the superb decorations of the walls and ceilings, executed here (in the style of *Rafaëlle's loggie* in the Vatican) more than forty years ago. Faded as are the colours and gildings, the embellishments of the Café Véron are the handsomest (because they are the quietest and tastefullest) that I have seen in Europe, next to those of the Caffè Florian, at Venice. But, having just left this place of entertainment, with what face can I straightway enter another café, and call for something which assuredly I do not want? Water, according to Sir John Falstaff, swells a man; and, although *mazagrans*, *bavaroises*, *orgeats*, and *limonades gazeuses* are all perfectly harmless beverages, from the John B. Gough point of view, I should present a pretty sight were I to be swelled with those refreshments. I do not want to play draughts or dominoes; and the morning papers have no longer any charms for me. I must give Baptiste another half hour

in which to make things straight at home; but whither shall I go? The Boulevard shops are still replete with delightful interest to me; but this is the noisiest hour of the day, and the noise is simply deafening; while, to tell the honest truth, I am ashamed of staring any longer into the shop-window of M. Barbédienne. One or two of his *employés* are always standing at the door (on the look-out possibly for the Nevada millionaire who wants *bronzes d'art*, and who is provided with those necessary cheques which, in my own case, still continue in the most unaccountable manner not to arrive); and I begin uneasily to fancy that M. Barbédienne's young men entertain suspicions that I have unholy designs upon the Mexican torreador, or the *cloisonné* enamel vase, or the *repoussé* standish, or the Triumphant Augustus. Eureka! I will employ the half hour which involuntarily I have to spare in roaming through the Passages.

I have a choice of two small cities, so to speak, of Passages on either side of the Boulevard, between the Rue Montmartre and the Rue Vivienne. On the Rue du Faubourg Montmartre side smiles on me the Passage Jouffroy. On the other, the Rue Vivienne side, the Passage des Panoramas with equal amenity invites me. Let us defer as long as possible the perils of crossing the road and the chance of being run over, and take the first Passage Jouffroy. At either corner of its boulevard extremity are two cafés, which at night are the

noisiest of their kind, but which by day are dark and cool and quiet. The Passage itself, although habitually thronged and unusually crowded just now (always in consequence of the Exhibition), is fairly well ventilated, and, comparatively speaking, tranquil. The class of wares sold in the handsome shops, and the prices charged for the merchandise, are on a parity with those of our Burlington Arcade. Otherwise there is not the slightest similarity between the Passage Jouffroy and the Piccadilly Bezesteen. It would be as idle, also, to liken it to such places of public resort and fancy-article dealing as the Victoria Arcade at Hamburg, the Galleria Vittorio Emanuele at Milan, or that formidable and somewhat forbidding passage—I forget its name—on the Linden at Berlin, in which, if I remember aright, there is one of the most comical and one of the ghastliest wax-work shows in Europe.

The Passage Jouffroy has its own original, peculiar, and inimitably Parisian character. Not only is an assortment of nearly all the whims of Vanity Fair to be found there, but there are procurable appliances for the refection of the inner man. Up a dark entry on the western side of the passage, and up a darker staircase, is the entrance to the *Dîner Something-or-Another*—say *Le Dîner Quelquechose*—a “fixed price” repast. Twice I have falteringly ascended to the sombre first landing of those Cimmerian stairs; and twice have I crept down again into the light, trembling, ashamed, afraid to encounter the contingencies of the *Dîner Quelquechose*. Yet nothing could be more inviting than the *carte* chalked, like the Diurnal Acts of ancient Rome, on a blackboard at the door: *Potage Gribouille, requins aux concombres, filet de baleine aux vieux parapluies, cotelette de loup à la poivrade, tête de gorilla à la Croquemitaine, salade de foin aux Ecuries d’Artois*, wine, dessert, coffee—all for four francs. No; I cannot venture upon it.

More restaurants? Plague, plague! At the eastern end of the Passage over against a saloon where you may have your boots blacked, with a general “brush-up and rub-down,” for fifteen centimes, are a pair of wooden gates, which to me possess a more fearsome interest than the wonderful portals of the Baptistery at Florence, or the gloriously rococo *grilles* in the Place

Stanislas at Nancy. They are the gates of the *Restaurant Autrechose*—an eating-house even cheaper than the *Dîner Quelquechose*. *Potage Mamamouchi, phoque à l’huile de morue, dragon rôti, queues de lézard en papillottes, civet de chats de Perse*, wine, dessert, and coffee—all for three francs. You do not ascend a staircase to this repast; you go down a flight of steps to it; and, peeping through the wooden bars of the gateway, I see the guests in scores being fed at little tables in little pens in a huge cellar. I have grinned through these bars so frequently, half in dolorous, half in droll, indecision, that I have begun to contemplate the possibility of the head waiter rushing up the steps some day; flinging open the gates, and “going” for me to the extent of seizing me by the coat-collar; dragging me down the steps, and feeding me *bon gré mal gré*. I can imagine him saying, “*La bourse ou la vie*—dine or die, too inquisitive Englishman!”



There is a toyshop in the Passage Jouffroy which is about the liveliest *magasin de joujoux* that I know. The harmony from that toyshop periodically enlivens the entire Passage. The principal performer is an automaton flute-player life-size, in the likeness of a youthful negro in ruffled shirtsleeves, and gay scarlet vest, velvet knickerbockers, yellow stockings, and high-heeled shoes with pink bows. Whether this sable swain is intended to represent one of King M'tesa's pages, or Othello the Moor of Venice, when he was a young man, I do not know; but I can vouch, when he is wound up, for his piping most melodiously. During the hours of breakfast and dinner he is generally, I am given to understand, silent. Why should he waste his sweetness on the desert air of a Passage temporarily tenanted,

it is to be presumed, by indigent persons who have nobody to breakfast or lunch with save Duke Humphrey? His Grace of Gloucester invites a vast multitude of persons of both sexes and all ages to enjoy his stately hospitality every day. *Potage à l'eau du ruisseau, bouchées de Macadam, entre-côtes de creux d'estomac au désespoir, filets de St. Cloud à la Morgue*—that is the Duke's menu, and there is nothing to pay. But when the people begin to swarm, full fed, out of the restaurant, chewing their toothpicks or puffing their cigarettes, and altogether in that pleasant frame of mind which leads humanity to buy Jouvin gloves, bracelets and earrings, photographs of Mademoiselle Sarah Bernhardt in pantaloons painting pictures or carving statues—if it be imperatively necessary that a lady artist should assume the costume of the nobler sex? what, I wonder, does Mademoiselle Rosa Bonheur wear: buckskins and jackboots?—and to purchase lace collars and cuffs, and dolls and Polichinelles for the little ones; and then the sable minstrel in the scarlet vest and the canary hose begins to tootle most sweetly. When his pining is at an end two little automaton bullfinches in a gilt cage—do you remember that sweet little jewelled bird in our '62 Exhibition?—begin to warble *à tutta gola*. They being hushed, mechanical Punch, having a string at the extremity of his caudal vertebræ pulled, jerks his arms and legs; wags both humps at once, to the intense delight of the children; and emits a sepulchral "rooty-tooty-tooing." After this you may reckon with tolerable certainty on hearing squeaks of "Papa!" "Mama!" uttered by expensive wax dolls. Then clockwork mice and locomotive engines begin to move; and the automaton swimmer begins to cleave with pliant arm the glassy wave in a zinc bowl full of water. The dancing sailor leaps; the magic donkeys agitate their hoofs; the tight-rope dancer executes surprising gambadoes; and the monkey in a powdered wig and the full Court costume of the time of Louis XV proceeds to play *Minuet de la Cour* on a toy harpsichord, accompanied by a squirrel on the violoncello and a guinea-pig on the harp. *Le tour est joué*. The dainty baits have been swallowed, and the toyshops begin to do a capital business.

Likewise it is both curious and edifying to

mark how eagerly these frivolities are watched by a throng who, to all appearances, have not the slightest idea of purchasing so much as a fifty-cent wheelbarrow or a one-franc fifty rag-doll. Look at that grim weather-beaten veteran, the specially selected *gardien de la paix*, who acts as censor of the morals and manners of the Passage Jouffroy. He is a Brave, for right across his face he is *balaféré* by the scar of some bygone sabre-stroke. He has served in bright fields. The Cross of the Legion, the medal for China and for military merit, the medal for the Italian campaign of '59, and our own Crimean medal, with two clasps, glitter on his valiant old breast.



He may have heard the automaton negro pipe, the little bullfinches sing, the Punches and the dolls squeak, the monkey play the *Minuet de la Cour* a thousand times. Yet evidently the sight and the sounds have not yet palled upon him. He listens like a three-years' child to the tootling—a smile of expectation mantles on his battered visage while the monkey is being wound up. He lays his hand on the shoulder of an intimate—a little weazened old man, almost as weazened as the puppet Punch yonder, and says, "*Attendez; vous allez voir comme il va être drôle. Il jouera son grand morceau, 'Qui qu'a vu Coco?'*" And when the bedizened ape strikes up "*Qui qu'a vu Coco?*" the veteran seems almost beside himself with pleasure; and softly keeps time with his staff of office to the fascinating air. Do I blame him for being pleased with

a rattle and tickled with a straw? What am I doing here but idling the time away until Baptiste has "fixed up" my room, and I can sit down at peace to work? As it is, I feel sorely inclined to ramble up and down the Passage Jouffroy until sundown; for I have been but playing with a shell on a sandy shore, and a whole ocean of Passages lies yet undiscovered before me.

You are not to suppose that Passage Jouffroy comes to an end with the boot-blackening and brushing-up establishment on one side, and the fixed-price restaurant, with the wooden-barred gates through which I grinned, on the other. There is a great deal more Passage, supplementary to the original arcade. You go down some steps and thread a corridor, in which there is a large bookstall, abounding with the peculiarly rubbishy, and in many respects ribald, publications on which the mind of contemporary France seems mainly to be fed, mingled with, however, and relieved by the admirable books of M. Jules Verne, and unimpeachable stories of MM. Erckmann-Chatrian, and some cheap and good translations of Livingstone's *Last Journals*, and Mr. H. M. Stanley's *How I found Livingstone*. The Explorer and the Discoverer are both amazingly popular in France; and in the Exhibition there is always a curious crowd round a charming little terra-cotta statuette of Stanley in full "Dark Continent" costume, to the accuracy of which, as a likeness, an autograph letter from the hero of the Lualaba-Congo bears witness. For the rest, the display made by a Parisian bookstall seems to have been chiefly brought together by John Bunyan's *Man with the Muck-Rake*. M. de Goncourt's unutterably repulsive *La Fille Eliza* in its thirty-second, and Emile Zola's unutterably hideous *L'Assommoir* in its fifty-ninth edition; these two books, with reprints of *Le Nabab*, *La Femme de Feu*, and *Mademoiselle Giraud ma Femme*, you see everywhere, even at the first-class booksellers' of the boulevards and the Rue de la Paix. *L'Assommoir*, brought out in fortnightly parts, is enjoying a tremendous sale; and the public are absolutely promised, at no distant period, a dramatised version of M. Zola's professedly

moral, but ineffably-disgusting romance.* In addition to such novels as these, the book-stalls exhibit a profusion of almanacs, among which the prophetic ones have decidedly the *pas*; for the Parisians, all free-thinkers as they may be, have not ceased to be grossly superstitious; and there is annually a tremendous demand for the *Triple Liégeois*, and the vaticinations of M. Mathieu de la Drôme. In England the Stationers' Company have at length grown ashamed of selling the yearly prognostications of "Francis Moore, Physician;" and I scarcely know what has become of our old and harmless and familiar friend, "Zadkiel;" but in France not only are prophetic almanacs eagerly purchased, but professional fortune-tellers openly advertise their readiness to unfold the mysteries of the future through the medium of chiromancy or somnambulism. The police extend a curious kind of toleration to these impostors, whom they find, it is said, very useful in the discovery of robberies: professional thieves being in the habit of having their fortunes told prior to essaying a *grand coup*. Even among educated Frenchmen the name of the famous *tireuse de cartes*, Mademoiselle le Normant, is still held in veneration.

I remember that Sibyl paying a visit to England many years ago. She was a squat, fussy little old woman, with gnarled and knotted visage and an imperturbable Eye. She wore her hair cut short and parted on one side, like a man's. She dressed in an odd-looking casaquin, embroidered and frogged like unto the jacket of a hussar, and she snuffed continually. This was the little old woman whom Napoleon I regularly consulted before setting out on a campaign; who had foretold to Josephine her divorce; and who, when Murat, King of Naples, visited her in disguise, simply looked at him; shuffled the cards; dealt him the knave of clubs; rose, said "*La séance est terminée; c'est dix louis pour les Rois*"; pocketed her fee, and left the room, snuffing terribly. In cartomancy the knave of clubs was called "*Le Grand Pendu*." Whosoever drew that fateful card was destined to die by the hand of the executioner.

* It is almost unnecessary to remark that since the above was written dramatised versions of the hideous *Assommoir* have been produced with immense success both in London and Paris.

Besides the unseemly novels and the prophetic almanacs, you may find that the tastes of the students of classic literature have been provided for in the shape of cheap editions of Molière—in their loyal devotion to whom the French, it must be admitted, and to their honour, have never swerved—of Voltaire's novelettes, such as *Candide*, *Zadig*, and *Micromégas*, and of such "classic" chronicles as the *Dames Galantes* of Brantôme, and the *Histoire Amoureuse des Gaules* of Bussy-Rabutin. Coarsely printed and rudely illustrated editions of the thousand-and-one romances of Alexandre Dumas the Elder are still plentiful; the late exemplary M. Charles Paul de Kock continues to find favour with the *cuisinière*, the *concierge*, and the *calicot*; but it is with grief and amazement that, not only in the Passages, but among the bookstalls and booksellers' shops of Paris generally, I notice a marked absence of the works of Béranger. I do hope that a French friend, an accomplished scholar and a man of letters was wrong lately, when he told me "*Le peuple ne connaît plus Béranger. Il est fini.*" Can it be that the king of *chansonniers*, a true and incorruptible Republican as we know him to have been, was too Napoleonic in his sympathies to suit the present

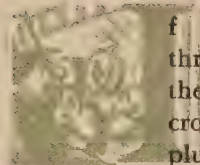
mood of the French popular mind, which is yet writhing under the poignant memories of Sedan? It was the fault, so ultra-democracy may think, of the author of *Les Infiniment Petits*, and *Le Dieu des Bonnes Gens*, that he likewise wrote such purely Bonapartist lyrics as *Le Cinq Mai*, *Les Souvenirs du Peuple*, and *Le Vieux Sergent*. It is the fashion just now among the Radicals to assail with the foulest abuse not only the name of the Third Napoleon, but those of Madame Mère, of the Duke of Reichstadt, of Queen Hortense, and Pauline and Caroline, and, in fact, of every member of the wonderful family which once exercised so magical a *puissance* over the French heart. Ever in out-of-the-way corners, and on the dead walls against which the five-centime ballads are pinned, I fail to find the stirring songs of Desaugières and Debreux, once so dear to the *ouvrier* class. I find *Le pied qui remue*, and *Qui qu'a vu Coco* in noisome abundance; but I rarely meet with *La Colonne*, or even with *Dis-moi, soldat, dis-moi; t'en souviens-tu?* which, in its pathetic patriotism, well-nigh equals the "Yo heave ho!" of Charles Dibdin. Has the remembrance of Sedan wholly thrown the prestige of these famous little ditties into the shade? It would seem so.





STILL THROUGH THE PASSAGES

October 11

 If you travel long enough through the continuations of the Passage Jouffroy, if you cross a narrow street, and plunge into the recesses of yet another gallery, you will come out at last in the bustling and business-like Rue du Faubourg Montmartre; but I prefer to retrace my footsteps even as far as the toyshop—*Aux Enfants Sages* is its suggestive title—where the black boy tootles on the flute, and the monkey in the powdered wig and the Louis Quinze costume plays on the harpsichord, accompanied by the squirrel and the guinea-pig. Then, passing through the two great cafés—which at night are full of very queer company—I emerge on the boulevard, boldly cross it, fortuitously escape being crushed by an omnibus or by one of the huge *tapisseries* and *chairs-à-bancs* going to the Exhibition, and dive into a labyrinth of Passages just opposite—the renowned Passages des Panoramas, indeed. Where the Panoramas are or used to be, or what particular scenes or events they panoramically represented, I have not the remotest notion. It is enough for me that they display an ever-moving, ever-interesting picture of human life, even more diversified than that visible in the Passage Jouffroy. The principal gallery is more aristocratic and more tranquil than its opposite neighbour. On one side of the Passages des Panoramas near the entrance there is a noted sweetstuff shop, in which I should say that it would be practicable for a young gentleman with

plenty of ready money, and of a generous disposition, to ruin himself at New Year and Paschal tides with the utmost promptitude and despatch. This particular *confiseur's*, which is almost as grand and as handsome as M. Diraudin's noted establishment in the Rue de la Paix, must do a tremendous business at Christmas and Easter. Then do the jewelled caskets, full of candied violets and preserved daffydowndillies—for the French seem to make lollipops from the flowers of the field as well as from the fruits of the garden—then do the models of the Arc de Triomphe, the Column of the Bastille, and the Venus of Milo—then do the delicious but indigestible-looking *bâtons* of *sucre de pomme* and the ingots of *nougat de Montelimar*, the pralines and the chocolate creams, the sugared almonds and the equivalents for our hardbakes and toffies—of the French synonyms for which I am entirely ignorant—find, I suppose, purchasers at whatever prices the proprietor of this amazing emporium of “goodies” chooses to demand. The shop goes right through into the Rue Vivienne; and behind the counters sit a fascinating cohort of beauteous young ladies with slim waists. The only persons whom I fail to discern there are the customers.

Perhaps I peep into the sweetstuff-shops at the wrong hour. Perhaps this is not precisely the season when lovers of confectionery are accustomed to purchase candied violets and preserved “daffydowndillies;” but, oddly enough, the invisibility to the naked eye of customers in

Parisian shops of the superior class strikes me very forcibly, while it puzzles me desperately, not only when I ramble in the Passages, but whenever I take a turn on the boulevards. The shops in the side streets in which provisions are sold—the *charcutiers* and the *rôtisseurs* in particular—are always thronged. The wine-shops and cafés—I counted seventeen of these drinking-places in the space of five minutes' perambulation of the Rue du Faubourg Montmartre—the *crémeries*, the cheap linendrapers' and haberdashers', the *débîts de tabac*, the toyshops, and so forth, all abound in clients; but it is with the extremest rarity that I ever discern a person having the outward and visible appearance of a customer in the grandest *magasins* of the boulevards. On the other hand, while purchasers are conspicuous by their absence, you are generally favoured with a full view of what the Italians call *La Bella Famiglia*. Monsieur le Patron may be away speculating at the Bourse, or quite as possibly playing dominoes over his absinthe or his *bock* at his favourite café; but Madame la Patronne *fait sa caisse* (balances her cash-book)—when did she take any money?—at her high desk of authority. In front of the counter a venerable dame, apparently the *patronne's* or her husband's grandmother, sits placidly knitting; half a dozen *demoiselles de magasin* are gossiping in corners; while on the floor sprawl three or four children in pinafores and bibs, superintended by a careful *bonne* in a high white

cap. There is sure, also, to be a dog of the party "to see fair"—generally a villainous-looking bulldog made by constant kindness to be the playfullest of pets; or a woolly poodle that impresses you with the idea that he is in a state of inexpressible dejection at the thought that he is to be shaved to-morrow, or that he is hilariously joyful at the remembrance that he was shaved this morning and that the operation will not be repeated for another fortnight. Stay; with equal certitude you may reckon on the presence of a huge, handsome, quiet cat, either on the counter or on one of the shelves in the windows, purring or thinking among the diamonds and the *articles de Paris*. This is all very nice and pretty and patriarchal—but where are the customers? All the business cannot be wholesale. From time to time the millionaire from Nevada must enter the shop, saying, "Show me your biggest *rivière* in brilliants that you can let me have for fifty thousand francs." My theory is that the apparent paucity of customers is really due to the unconscionably long hours of business adopted by French tradespeople of the highest class. They open their shops before nine in the morning, and they do not close them until eleven at night. Thus the average quota of customers, instead of being quickly dispatched in the course of say seven hours, as in our Piccadilly and Regent Street shops, is spread, in Paris, over a weary space of thirteen hours, and is attenuated even to invisibility by the over-pro-



longation of business. Early closing is certainly not among the social reforms which have found favour in Paris.

Not the least among the charms of the Passages des Panoramas is that they are continually offering fresh objects for contemplation. The objects themselves have very possibly been there during a long series of years; but, strange to tell, although you may be a veteran *flâneur*, you do not remember to have seen the pleasant sights before. The leading show-shops of the main gallery are, of course, familiar to you. Take the great display of bookbinding, for example. Everything that can be done in the shape of embossed, indented, and inlaid morocco, russia, roan, vellum, and calf—of emblazoned backs and tooled edges—seems to have been lavished on the embellishment of rare editions of Molière, Voltaire, Beaumarchais, La Fontaine, Racine, and Corneille; and similar honours, although of not quite so elaborate a nature, are bestowed on tall copies of the works illustrated by Gustave Doré, such as the Dante, the Don Quixote, and the Paradise Lost. As for the sumptuously illustrated tomes put forth during the last few years by the Hachettes, the Dirmin-Didots, and the Mames—such as the *Moyen Age* and *Dix-huitième Siècle* of M. Paul Lacroix, the *Jeanne d'Arc*, and the *Sainte Cécile*—those superb specimens of typography and engraving labour, to risk a slight paradox, under the disadvantage of being so handsomely bound in cloth, and to have been so recently published, that it has not been deemed necessary to promote them to the dignity of whole binding. Let me add that the art of *reliure* has attained a grade of consummate excellence in France, and that French bookbinders may be held as the foremost craftsmen of that kind in Europe.

There is a plain reason for the exceptional development among our neighbours of an art which, in its higher stages, certainly languishes in England. We bind excellently well in cloth: so well, indeed, that bookbuyers on a large scale are quite content to allow their recently acquired copies of the costliest works to remain in their original jackets of highly hot-pressed pasteboard and calico. You may have your old volumes whole or half bound; but you think

twice before sending your complete Froude, your Ruskin—if you are lucky enough to possess such a rarity—your Cunningham's *Ben Jonson*, your Percy Fitzgerald's *Boswell's Johnson* to the bookbinders; first, because you never know when you will get your property back again—our best bookbinders seem to think, to judge from the time they absorb in executing their orders, that a voyage to the Straits of Malacca and back again will do books no harm; and next, because the money you will have to pay for binding would enable you to purchase the complete Jeremy Bentham, the entire Hobbes, or the Howell's *State Trials*, after which you have been hankering for months. It may fairly be said that no real lover of books was ever rich enough to purchase a tithe of the books which he really desires to possess; thus the bookworm, unless he have a craze for Grolliers and Roger Paynes—in which case he is not to be looked upon with much greater respect than if he were a collector of Stradivarius or old blue-and-white Nankin—is apt to regard his disbursements as money diverted more or less from a useful to a merely ornamental purpose; and in a multitude of cases he allows his Macaulay's *England* or his Grote's *Greece* to remain in the same neat but inexpensive garb assumed by the last three-volume novel from Mudie's.

In France the case is altogether different. With the exception of a few *livres d'art*, such as those to which I have recently drawn attention, and of the travelling guide-books, which must needs have a cloth binding in order that they may be comfortably stowed away in the pocket, but which otherwise can scarcely be considered as books at all, every French work, from the costliest to the cheapest, is published in a paper cover only. That modest envelope was donned by M. Thier's *Histoire du Consulat et de l'Empire*, and by M. Littré's colossal Dictionary. It is donned by M. Taine's *Origines de la France Contemporaine*, by the last novel of M. Octave Feuillet, the last theological or historical study of M. Ernest Renan, the last play of M. Alexandre Dumas or M. Victorien Sardou; it is equally the garb of *L'Assommoir* and *Le Nabab*, or the scurrilities of Paul de Kock and the extravagances of Xavier de Monté-

pin. The biggest and the smallest of French books is thus substantially only a pamphlet; and if you have a huge body of pamphlets loosely sewn together, and you do not see about having them bound, the paper-covered mass will speedily fall in pieces. As a natural consequence, the services of the bookbinder in France are in constant requisition to save valuable books from destruction. As for the works which are not of any value, they never get bound at all: a circumstance which conduces to the profit of the bookseller, since the work, albeit rubbishy, may be in popular request. In its unbound state it has disintegrated, and has found, perchance, a home in the dust-bin; but there are still people who wish to read it, and, the last edition being exhausted, a new one is called for, to the publisher's great joy. I have always fancied that one reason why cookery books are, as a rule, such an excellent property to the publishers thereof is that newly-married couples are in the habit of presenting a copy of the last edition of Francatelli or Mary Hooper to their cooks. The volumes are reasonably well bound, to be sure; but of all Places of Destruction I know none more ruinous than a kitchen; and in a very short space of time the cookery book comes to grief. Either the cat steals it—a cat would steal the new chimes of St. Paul's, belfry and all—or the kitchenmaid lights the fire with it, or it gets into the cook's drawer—that “chaos come again”—and is seen no more. So additional copies of Francatelli or Mary Hooper are demanded, and the publishers dance jigs of delight.

Prosperous, nevertheless, as the craft of book-binding appears to be in France, the prices charged by the binders seem to be very high. When anything of the nature of “extra” work is required, the payment demanded may be qualified as extravagant. In the bookshop of the Passages des Panoramas I find a set of Voltaire—the Kehl edition, in fifty volumes, only half-bound—marked two thousand francs, or eighty pounds. Now, editions of standard authors in England, full-bound, do not average more than fifteen shillings a volume. When, moreover, in Paris to handsome binding there is superadded the rarity of an edition, or interleaving with curious engravings, the price asked

approaches the monstrous. There is one work in the Passages des Panoramas, a set of French classics in thirty volumes, copiously interleaved with exotic plates, for which the modest sum of twelve thousand francs is demanded. Why, a first folio of Shakespeare could be procured for something like that sum. A copy of the *Contes de la Fontaine*, “Farmers-General” edition, Amsterdam, 1762, and with the plates, after Charles Eisen, in perfect “states”—amateurs will understand what I mean—could not be obtained in the Passages des Panoramas for less than fifty pounds sterling. One exceptionally perfect copy fetched at the late sale of the library of M. Firmin-Didot a hundred and twenty pounds. It happened that, just before I came to Paris, a friend made me a present of the first volume of this much-prized work. The second he could not find. Lately I asked the



great bibliopole of the Passages whether he thought he could possibly procure me a copy of the second volume. “Has M’sieu the real edition?” asked the bibliopole; “Amsterdam, 1762, Eisen’s plates, perfect ‘states,’ and so forth?” I satisfied him on all these points. There was an odd twinkle in his eyes. “It will be a matter of time, difficulty, and expense,” he concluded: “*mais voyons; combien voulez-vous me vendre ce petit livre-là?*” He wanted to buy my first volume of the *Contes*; and, had I not been determined to dine that day with the strictest economy at the *Ristorante del Matto Forestiere*, I would—so hard are the times—have struck a bargain with him at once.

You may object that, in venturing on this little disquisition on books and bookbinding in France and England, I have tacitly violated a pledge given long ago—a pledge not to be more technical than I can possibly help. Still, one must indulge from time to time in a little technology.

You will observe that I have always spoken of the Passages des Panoramas in the plural. In this I am justified by the inscription above the boulevard entrance; but I am sure I do not know how many covered ways there are in this interesting region. Straying from the main avenue, full as it is of jewellers, confectioners, fancy stationers, toyshops, and dealers in old Dresden and new Sèvres, you stray up "all manner of streets"—or passages—as Leigh Hunt's pig did. One gallery takes you into another, and so, you know not how, you struggle into the Rue Vivienne. Another corridor gives me egress into a narrow purblind street, where my barber resides. He is a little round puncheon of a man, with head of bushy black hair, and sparkling black eyes—a Provençal from Marseilles. Most people, even the stupidest, possess some art or craft in the study of which they take intense delight, but the practice of which is, in a commercial sense, wholly useless to them. It happened many years since that I acquired a colloquial knowledge of the Provençal dialect—it is no mere patois I can assure you—and every other day my barber and his family and I talk the *langue d'oc* together. He is a poet—all the *gens du midi* are poets—and recites quatrains to me in the intervals of *la barbe* and the *coup de peigne*. He confides his sorrows to me. His eldest daughter, he tells me, is fast degenerating into a Parisienne. This the young lady stoutly denies; but I observe that she is somewhat reluctant to call un *paysan* "oun *pacan*," to say "*riprouchava*" instead of *reprocher*, and "*giam-mai*" in lieu of *jamais*. "Paris," murmurs my barber, "has no heart. Paris gives itself airs. *Lou manca natura*. She is all artificial. What would Paris think if, when my day's work was over, I sat before my shop-door playing the guitar and singing a little canzon." I am in hopes that these friendly folks will ask me to take la *bouillabaisse* with them some evening. Already the barber (who takes me, I think, for



a commercial traveller, and condoles with me on the hardness of the times) has invited me to partake of "*oun verre di cassis*," at an adjoining wine-shop kept by a Provençal—an honest man from the Golfe St. Juan. I might pick up grander acquaintances, you may opine, than a barber who shaves, powders, and combs you, "*fixes*" you with brilliantine and *vinaigre de toilette*, all for the sum of twopence-halfpenny sterling, and offers to treat you to drink into the bargain. I consider that my barber and his brown-skinned, black-haired family are all reminiscent to me of the Beloved Land—of the lapis-lazuli sky, the ultramarine sea, the tawny shore, the dazzling white cottages with the roofs of loose dusky tiles, the trellised vines, the festooned olives, the gardens bursting forth with oranges and figs and lemons. Ay, beyond all this, the pleasant flow of the *langue d'oc* in the purblind little street by the Passages des Panoramas wafts me yet farther away—farther, through the Mesogeian Sea—farther, through the bright Levant—farther, to "the Palms and Temples," not of the South, but of the East. *Kennst du das Land?* At all events the barber and his family, together with a few beggars whom I have held brief converse with, are the most natural folk that I have met with during my sojourn in Paris.

In one of the Passages I find a restaurant—a fixed-price one. Breakfast, two francs fifty; dinners, three francs, I think. Say the *Dîner des Calicots*. "*Non ragionam di lor ma guarda e passa*." I may only just hint that I saw an elderly English gentleman coming down the stairs of the *Dîner des Calicots*, about half-past six one evening, looking very pale and ill. And yet, unless I am very much mistaken, I had met that same elderly Englishman at about half-past five looking in at the window of the fancy meerschaum pipe-shop. He was then a fresh-coloured gentle-

man. Perhaps the hors-d'œuvres had not agreed with him. Another and more remarkable place of public refection in the Passages is in a very dark gallery, out of which you are suddenly shot, without any notice, so to speak, into the Rue Montmartre. This is the Ristorante del Matto Forestiere. It is a genuine Italian house. This is where I dined, with the strictest economy, on the day when I had doubts about selling my odd volume of the *Contes de la Fontaine* to the proprietor of the sumptuous bookshop. At the Ristorante del Matto Forestiere they will give you all the typical examples of that which was once the very best, but which, I know not why, has within recent years degenerated into, with the exception of Spain, the worst cuisine in Europe. I do not know any city in Italy (Rome and Milan always excepted) where one can dine with tolerable comfort. The table d'hôte at the Hotel Victoria, Venice, used to be admirable; but that too has degenerated. The condition of Florence, from a culinary point of view, is deplorable; and I have never met with anybody who has dined well, culinarily speaking, at Bologna or at Genoa. And yet, when Cardinal Campeggio came to England, more than three hundred years ago, on the Catherine of Aragon divorce business, the Italian Peninsula was renowned above all other countries for its refined and succulent school of cookery. His Holiness the Pope took the greatest interest in the national art, and instructed his envoy to draw up a minutely exhaustive report of the state of cookery in England. Cardinal Campeggio's report was remarkably succinct, being comprised in two words—*Niente affato*. There was nothing whatever to report about English cookery.

At the Ristorante del Matto Forestiere you will find Italian cookery of a better kind than you can hope to meet with in Italy itself at the present day. The *risotto*—boiled rice, "accommodated" with oil, cheese, and saffron—is as succulent as it is wholesome. The *ravioli* and the *polpetti*, the *lassagne* and the *stuffato*, are all good; and they have at least a dozen ways of dressing macaroni. Finally, they are very great at this restaurant in the art of preparing *uccellini*—small birds, such as quails, larks, thrushes—*beccafici*, and so on, which are roasted

with blankets of fat bacon and vine-leaves over their plump little breasts, and served in a hollow circle of *polenta* boiled to a paste. But that it is wicked to eat little birds, I should say that their *uccellini* were delicious; in any case I am afraid that some thousands of *grives*, *mauviettes*, *cailles*, and *beccafici* are brought every week to the Halles Centrales; principally from the South of France and from the shores of the Lakes of Como and Garda. The *grives* are taken in the largest number in the vineyards. The little creatures peck at the ripened grapes until they get tipsy, and then the fowler comes and snares them—a fate that occasionally happens to other creatures besides *grives*. Perhaps it is not naughtier to eat these small birds than to wear them stuffed, and with their wings outspread, in a lady's bonnet. Bird hats and feather bonnets are all the rage in Paris at present; and there must be a terribly continuous slaughter of feathered folks in Italy, in the West Indies, and in South America, to satisfy the needs of Vanity Fair.

The prices at the Ristorante del Matto Forestiere are phenomenally cheap. The proprietor has apparently forgotten the existence of the Exhibition altogether; or perhaps he has a regular clientèle? and his customers, being mainly Italians and naturally frugal, informed him in the outset that if he raised his prices they would go and dine somewhere else. Next, however to one of the Duval Bouillon-Bœuf establishments—I intend, as a matter of bounden duty, to dine there before I depart from Paris, but I have not yet succeeded in screwing my courage to the sticking-place—I should say that the Ristorante del Matto Forestiere was about the cheapest restaurant that a foreigner with cosmopolitan tastes could dine at in Paris. I do not say that it is the best. I do not contend that the *minestra* is superlatively good; that the *carne di manzo* is incomparable, or the *arrosto* perfection; that the wine is unimpeachable, or the coffee unexceptionable. But the place is characteristic and genuine; and that is something to find in the midst of a wilderness of French eating-houses, where conventionality has come to the complexion of the most wearisome monotony.



EASILY PLEASED

October 20

I am ready to admit that a person of nominally cheerful temperament and of moderate desires may be Easily Pleased in London. The overgrown metropolis of the British Empire does not enjoy the repute of being a very gay city; yet to my mind there is always something on view, or something going on within the postal radius, of a nature to interest and amuse those fortunate individuals who have nothing to do save to stroll about the streets and amuse themselves. Had I any disposable leisure of my own, I should be glad, when in England, to serve as a guide and interpreter to *blasé* people of the Sir Charles Coldstream type, and show them all kinds of places and things where and by which they might easily be pleased. Do you know the delightful model of the little gentleman in the tightly-fitted silk pants and socks, and the exquisite shirt-front and faultless cuffs, at the hosier's shop in Regent's Street? Have you taken note of his superb little whiskers and moustaches? And the Imperial Lady in wax, and in the blue-satin corset, perpetually revolving at the staymaker's nearly opposite? And the young lady in the riding-habit and the gentleman in full hunting-costume at the merchant-tailor's? And Mr. Cremer junior's dolls? And the permanent wedding-breakfast at the French confectioner's in Oxford Street? And the painted indiarubber mutton-cutlets, lizards, turbot, lobsters, and

death's-heads—all so many tobacco-pouches in disguise—at the German fancy warehouse near the Lyceum Theatre? And the tiny fountains and *jets d'eau* at the filter-shop hard by where Temple Bar formerly stood? And the hundred-ton guns, and the frigate tossed on the waves of a clock-work ocean, at the Model Dockyard in Fleet Street? And Sir John Bennet's ball-banging giants in Cheapside? And the newest exhibits of the Stereoscopic Company, east and west? And the armoury of miniature pots, pans, and kettles—I am delighted to find that the business is still carried on—at the corner of Bow Churchyard? And the peripatetic picture-dealers who hang about Lothbury and Bartholomew Lane with gaudily-framed oil-paintings, for which they sometimes ask twenty pounds from old ladies who have come to the Bank to draw their dividends, and for which they are generally willing to take twenty shillings? And that wonderful museum of dolls in the Waterloo Road? And the Bluecoat boys at play, "like troutlets in a pool," behind the grating in Newgate Street? And the solemn little Foundlings quietly disporting themselves—boys on one side, girls on another—in their spacious grass-plots in Guildford Street?

When I have been absent a long time from England I return to these scenes and creatures as to old familiar friends. I miss a well-remembered crossing-sweeper now and then; but still the supply of sweepers who solicit "A copper,



Coquetry - Rue de la Paix



Cabaret Can - Can

yer honour!" seems to be kept up. One generation of blind men and their dogs is succeeded by another; and it may be the great-grandson of the choice monkey with the cocked hat that diverted me in my youth, who now goes through the manual exercise, sweeps with a long broom the platform of his tripod, fires off a rifle, and, the performance being over, nestles, with an expression of resignation half-comic, half-rueful, in his Italian master's bosom. There is no solution of continuity in these gratuitous spectacles. Punch never seems to grow older; and Karl and Hans and Ludwig, of the German "green-baize band," look as young as though they had been rejuvenated by some beneficent Mephistophiles. They and the shops and the gratuitous street-sights—even to the laying down of the wood-pavement, and the laying bare of the entrails of the streets in shape of gas and water-pipes and electric telegraph-wires—seem all specially provided for the benefit of those who are willing to be Easily Pleased.

This being granted, it must nevertheless be borne in mind that in London long distances have to be traversed before you can light on the spots where you can be Easily Pleased; that our deplorable climate precludes us—notwithstanding the dictum of Charles II—from strolling about the streets at least a hundred and fifty days in every year; and that there are scores and scores of London streets from which absolutely no kind of entertainment can be derived. Do you think you could be Easily Pleased in Wimpole Street? Is there anything diverting in Portland Place? Do you think of Bernard Street, Russell Square, as a theme for philosophic contemplation? How about Golden Square? Have you ever discovered the humours of Stamford Street, Blackfriars? Did Burton Crescent ever yield you any pleasure? Is the Alpha Road a very lively locality? On the other hand, I contend that there is no street, *passage*, *place*, *impasse*, *avenue*, *quai*, *cité* or *boulevard* within Paris where the cheerful observer who is content with little may not be Easily Pleased. The Place Ventadour—where, by the way, to the national shame, the noble Théâtre des Italiens is being demolished, to give place to the Crédit Something or Another—is generally accounted to be the dulllest locality in Paris. A *porte-monnaie*

full of bank-notes lay there once, they say, for four-and-twenty hours without being discovered; but I will undertake at any hour of the day to be as Easily Pleased in the Place Ventadour as on the Boulevard des Italiens. There is always something going on in the quietest as in the busiest quarters to interest and to amuse the *flâneur*. And that is why the Parisian—he need not be a Frenchman; he may be a loyal adopted son of Lutetia, like Gavarni's Englishman, who had "lived in Paris since the capture of Paris by the English"—is the most accomplished *flâneur* in the world.

Take the shop-signs in general, for instance, the *charcutiers'* signs in particular. We have remarkably fine pork in England. An English sucking-pig is, in degree, as pretty as an oil-miniature by Meissonier. An English side of bacon is a noble spectacle; but how wretchedly tame and ineffective is the *étalage* of an English pork-butcher's! As for a London tripe-shop, it is really repulsive to look upon; and it is only now and again, in a great ham-and-beef shop, say in the Hampstead Road or in Kentish Town, that a feeble attempt is made to produce an artistic ensemble by the piling up of pyramids of pork-pies, or the display of huge blue-and-white basins full of coagulated mock-turtle soup. As for artistic decoration of the counter or the shop-front, that is wholly absent, and wooden semblance of ham, rudely gilt, generally does duty as a sign. Now the Parisian *charcutier's* is, on the contrary, all sparkling neatness and symmetrical taste. The sign and the arabesques decorating the door-jambs, painted in oil and scrupulously defended by plate-glass panels, are frequently really excellent works of art. I have been told recently of the sad end of a most capable artist, who for many years had devoted himself to the decoration of the exteriors of pork-shops. He had undergone a thorough academical training in the studio of a distinguished French painter, and he had once competed, albeit unsuccessfully, for the *Grand Prix de Rome*. The subject given out on the occasion when the unfortunate deceased competed for the prize was "Trimalcion's Banquet." The poor painter made the necessary sketches, and was then securely locked up in his loge at the *École des Beaux Arts* to paint his picture. The com-

mission, by whom it was subsequently examined, acknowledged that all the details of still life in the picture were admirably executed. Nothing could be more microscopically faithful to nature than the crayfish and the red mullet, the boars' heads and the peacocks, the oysters and the wild ducks. *Ab ovo usque ad malum*, all the eatables were superbly imitated; only the human personages were villainously drawn and vilely coloured, so the Examining Commission did not send the unlucky competitor to the Villa Medici. The result was that he became a painteer of *nature morte*. He vegetated long and miserably as a picture-dealer's hack, but at length found more remunerative patronage among the pork-butchers.



As a painter of *charcuterie* the unsuccessful competitor for the *Grand Prix de Rome* obtained a kind of renown. His garlands of sausages, displayed against a sky of pure azure flecked with fleecy clouds, were enthusiastically spoken of in the Rue de Bac; he had a prodigious success on the Boulevard de Strasbourg with a *hure de sanglier*—a boar's head austere posed on a platter of old Faenza ware; and the Faubourg St. Denis was in raptures with the exquisite finish of his *terrines de foie gras* and his *andouillettes de Troyes*. He was the Teniers of pigs' feet à la *Sainte Ménéhould*; the Paul Potter of cowheel à la *Biribi*, the Rafaëlle of snails with veal-stuffing, the Michael Angelo of *jambons de*

Bayonne. He excelled in Gorgonzola cheese. Few could touch him in Bologna *mortadella*. His bacon was magisterial, his truffled turkey truly grand. He earned a handsome livelihood by the exercise of porcine art; but his friends remarked with sorrowful anxiety that a settled gloom had taken possession of him. He grew more and more morose and desponding. A fortnight since—I tell the story as it was told to me—the poor fellow was found hanging from a cross-beam in his studio. He was quite dead. On his table was found a slip of paper containing these words: "Let no man be accused of my death. I am determined to destroy myself, because these six months past I have failed miserably in savoury jelly." Poor man! It was hard enough to have missed the *Grand Prix de Rome*; but break down in the simulation of galantine was Fortune's unkindest cut of all.

You may be as Easily Pleased in the humblest little Parisian bye-street, say off the Rue Dauphine, as when you are standing in front of the lordliest *charcutier's* in the Faubourg Montmartre. I can go farther, and say that, as a spectacle, Potel and Chalot do not take my breath away, and that even the superb Chevot does not astound me over-much. I can see finer whole salmon at Groves's than the traditional fish which is a *pièce de résistance* at Chevet's. Indeed a great part of Chevet's show consists in the artistic "make up." Take, for example, those festoons of bananas. Bananas are not reckoned of much account in Covent Garden Market. Consider that cunning bordering of oranges and cocoa-nuts to a saddle of not very appetising mutton *pré-salé*. I daresay that the oranges are a franc apiece, and that the most fanciful prices are charged for the cocoa-nuts, the "coster's" price of which in London is fourpence each. But in that little bye-street off the Rue Dauphine I am Easily Pleased by more natural, and, to me, more picturesque, bits of life, animated and still. Every little greengrocer's shop, every tiny *crémèrie*, is a picture. What richness of colour, what velvety smoothness of texture, in that neatly-piled cone of ready-boiled spinach on its snowy cloth, and with the clean wooden spatula for serving out the wholesome toothsome vegetable! Where can I buy cold boiled spinach in London? And what a dirty hole is a London

fried-fish shop! They are frying away furiously in the little bye-street off the Rue Dauphine. Here is a famous *friture* of gudgeons; in another snug corner potatoes leap, crackling, in their scalding bath of oil. Yonder, a mighty old dame, who might be the grandmother of the Gracchi, in a clean white bib and apron, is frying eels with the loftiest of airs. Next door to a cobbler working lustily away in his stall—few and far between are the cobblers' stalls left in London—is a triangular niche, which proudly announces itself, on a capitally-painted sign, to be the "Petite Renommée de la Galette." A pretty girl, in a blue-duffel dress, with a white apron, and white-linen sleeves, is continually dispensing slabs of the greasy delicacy. Exiguous as is the niche, it has a background, and there I can dimly discern an oven, and the pretty girl's father baking *galette* seemingly for ever and ever. He has been baking it to my knowledge these forty years past. To me it is always the same *galette*, always hot, always fresh, always young, like the royal countenance on the coinage and the postage-stamps.



I will buy two sous'-worth of that *galette*, and devour it, *sur place*, even if I expire forthwith of indigestion. Ah, I have eaten the *galette* over and over again in the time that is dead and so dear to me. Steeped in poverty to the lips, but Easily Pleased and passably content, what did you want when you were young, unracked by disease, unwrung by regrets, beyond the few pennyworths of sustenance that you could procure in the little bye-street? You scarcely ever

visited the fashionable side of the Seine. Monsieur Dusautoy, the tailor, might go to Hong Kong for you. Where was the Café Anglais? What kind of people dined at the Maison Dorée? You scarcely knew. Assuredly you never cared. Yours the slumbers light, the early wander, the modest breakfast on what the *crêmerie*, the greengrocer's, the fried-fish shop would yield; the two sous'-worth of *caporal* tobacco, or the *petit Bordeaux* cigar which cost but a sou; and then the serious business of the day—the business of doing nothing save sweeping with eager eyes over all the printed treasures of the bookstalls, all the graphic and ceramic marvels of the curiosity shops from the Quai aux Fleurs to the Quai d'Orsay. Was there any harm in having a small parcel containing fried potatoes in your coat-pocket while you were consulting an antique edition of Montaigne? Was it high treason to munch a crust-and-butter and a hard-boiled egg while you scanned a rare Robert Strange, a precious Raphael Morghen? Did you derogate from your social position by walking into the nearest cabaret and ordering a *chopine*? I think not. I think so still, as I munch the pennyworth of *galette*—not without a kind of suffocating sensation in the throat. It must be imminent indigestion; but what is it Sir John Falstaff says about his old friends who are dead?

The *rôtisseurs*, all over Paris, seem equally capable of easily pleasing people. The Paris "roaster" is something more and something less than a London cookshop-keeper. As a rule, he does not have a restaurant attached to his establishment. He deals not in made dishes. He does not serve portions. He has nothing to do with vegetables or sweets. But he continues without intermission to roast poultry, game, and joints. His spits are never idle. Supposing that you, a modest rentier, or a professional man with no very extensive accommodation in your own apartment, propose to entertain a few friends to dinner. The soup is always safe. Every Frenchwoman—and, for the matter of that, almost every Frenchman—can make soup. You can get as many oysters as you like at a franc and a half a dozen, at the *écaillage* at the corner. Fish is not necessarily expected. The *bouilli* from the soup, garnished, makes an *entrée de viande de boucherie*. The *hors-d'œuvre* you buy at the

charcutier's; the *pâtissier* sends you the sweets. But you still lack your roast. Where are you to obtain your *gigot cuit à point*, your *rosbif à l'Anglaise*, your *dinde aux marrons*, your brace of pheasants or partridges, your fat capon, or your spring chickens? In your dilemma the *rôtisseur* stands your friend. You order in the morning the joint, or the poultry, or game which you require, and at the appointed time your *bonne* calls for it, or the *rôtisseur's* boy brings the viand to your abode, piping hot.

I cannot help fancying that roaster's functions might be made very easily adaptable to the requirements of civilisation in London. Innumerable families, when they wish to give an extraordinary entertainment, have the dinner "sent from the pastry-cook's," to the disorganisation of the entire household, and the secret wrath of the cook, who—good woman—could manage a

small dinner very well, but is somewhat over-weighted with a large one. Possibly she has no gas-stove, and her kitchen-range will not accommodate three roasts at a time. Under such circumstances what a benefactor would the *rôtisseur* be! A sirloin of beef, a roast goose, a pair of fowls, a haunch of mutton, a brace of pheasants, a roast hare—the Magician of the Spit would furnish all these viands with promptitude and despatch, and the hostess would be rescued from the many embarrassments which environ the "pastrycook's dinner," including the sable-clad waiter with the large feet and the Berlin gloves, whose solemn presence and continuous—albeit secretly indulged—thirst always vaguely reminds you of those other sable-clad servitors who are associated with cake and wine, black gloves, scarves, and hat bands.





HIGH HOLIDAY IN THE CITY

October 24



First let me briefly sum up what has been done in the way of public rejoicings. The State has, so far as the million is concerned, very wisely done scarcely anything at all, and has left the million to do everything for themselves. "Hang out your banners on your outward walls; light up your girandoles and your Chinese lanterns; sing whatever songs you please, and joy go with you." Such has been practically the counsel given by authority to the public at large; and the advice has been universally and enthusiastically followed. Only from eighteen to twenty thousand spectators could be privileged to witness the somewhat tedious ceremony of prizes in the Palais de l'Industrie. The real pageant was to be seen out of doors, and that pageant was provided by the population at large. Dr. Johnson said that he went to Ranelagh Gardens to look at ten thousand people, and to feel that ten thousand people were looking at him. With an analogous intent did the gentleman with the horns, hoofs, and tail, in Southey's "Devil's Walk," "stand in Tottenham Court Road, either by choice or by whim; And there he saw Brothers the Prophet, And Brothers the Prophet saw him." Since Saturday night a million and a half Parisians, and some scores of thousands of foreigners, have been flocking up and down the

main thoroughfares of Paris staring at one another, and deriving, apparently, the most intense enjoyment from the spectacle. "Où irons-nous à présent? Nous avons été un peu partout"—"Where shall we go now? We have been almost everywhere"—I heard a stout French husband say to his stouter wife, on Monday afternoon. "Descendons encore le Boulevard des Italiens," said the lady, seemingly not in the least tired; and off they went to enjoy a fresh lease of staring and being stared at. The pleasure of promenading never palls on the essentially out-of-doors people. When they have stared at each other they stare into the shop-windows and newspaper kiosques; then they stare at the cabs and omnibuses; and if a shower of rain comes on, they crowd into the passages or under the arcades of the Rue de Rivoli, and find new faces and things to stare at. Where is the use of paying an extravagant price to witness, in an over-heated and over-crowded theatre, a performance in a language with which you may be imperfectly acquainted, when you may witness one of the liveliest dramas ever performed on the stage of that great theatre the World, in the cool, open, spacious streets, for nothing at all?

Paris broke out into bunting on Saturday afternoon. From careful inquiry I ascertained in the Rue St. Denis that a tricoloured flag of a gay but "sleezy" fabric could be purchased,

pole, tassels, gilt spearhead, and all, for 3*fr.* 50*c.*; but there were more modest *gonfalons* in calico which could be obtained at a much cheaper rate. Tricoloured cockades in silk were freely offered at fifty centimes apiece; in cardboard they were quoted at two sous each. Miniature tricoloured adornments for the headstalls of horses were to be had for a franc a dozen; and a very nice Chinese lantern could be bought for ten sous. The humblest houses in the humblest streets displayed one or more of these cheerful and graceful decorations; while in the principal thoroughfares the proprietors of the great shops and cafés had only to bring out their reserve stock of flags and banners which they had laid in for the National Fête of the 30th June last. With one exception the nations were most impartially and liberally represented from an heraldic point of view on the boulevards. The Italian tricolour and the Cross of Savoy, the Austrian *Schwarz-gelb*, the Russian flag with the double-headed eagle on the vast field of yellow, the American stars and stripes, and our own Union Jack, together with the Spanish tricolour, "blood to the fingers' ends," and a number of bizarre cognisances belonging to less known nationalities, flaunted and fluttered from thousands of windows. I even saw, at a perfumer's on the Boulevard Montmartre, a very creditable imitation of the stateliest banner in the world—the Royal Standard of England. It is true that the designer had thrown in a leopard or two, and the Prince of Wales's plumes and the Order of the Garter, and had thus caused some confusion among the quarterings; nor, perhaps, was a superimposed escutcheon of Britannia riding on a lion, and looking like Danneker's Ariadne, who had suddenly bethought herself of donning a helmet and some light drapery in order not to be thought "schkocking," strictly in accordance with the proper laws of blazonry; still the intent was excellent and the effect superb. Opinions were divided as to whether the perfumer's design was the banner of the Lord Mayor of London or of his Royal Highness himself; but the majority held that it was the device of the Prince whose photograph is in every shop-window, whose effigy decorates ladies' neckties, boxes of gloves, cakes of soap and chocolate, and corners of pocket-handkerchiefs,

and whose name is on every Parisian lip. We have two ex-Kings of Spain among us—Don Francisco de Assis, and Amadeo, Duke of Aosta; we have a Prince of Denmark and a Prince of Holland; but the Prince of Wales carries all before him in the way of popularity.

Among other privileges conceded to the Parisians on occasions of high holidays such as the present is to play in the public thoroughfares on that detestable instrument, the French horn. It is only during the Carnival, on the evenings of the *Mi-Carême*, and on fête days, that the sound of this mournfullest of wind instruments is tolerated; at other seasons—legal torture having been abolished in 1789—the horn is rigorously prohibited by the police. But since Saturday the excruciating dismal wheezings and croakings of the French horn have been audible all over Paris. Chiefly it is noticeable in the bye-streets; for in the main thoroughfares the roar of the passing vehicles is so loud and so incessant that the lugubrious strains laboriously pumped out from this execrable shawm attract but little attention. In a bye-street "le Monsieur qui sonne du cor" has things all his own way, and can gratify to the full his desire, which is obviously to please himself by making as many of his neighbours wretched as he possibly can. He



is not a professional musician. O, dear no! He is only an amateur of human misery, an unconscious disciple of the gifted but anonymous English misanthrope who wrote that fascinating book, the *Art of Ingeniously Tormenting*. The "Monsieur qui sonne du cor" appears to me to live usually in an *entresol*. So soon as the police

taboo on his abhorrent clarion is provisionally suspended, he throws his window wide open and, leaning over the sill, proceeds to discourse his terrific minstrelsy. I wonder whether Blondel the troubadour was a proficient on the French horn. If such were indeed the case, the misery of the captivity of the lion-hearted King must have been woefully aggravated by hearing

"Ô Richard, ô mon roi!

Tout l'univers t'abandonne;

Dans ce monde il n'y a que moi

Qui s'intéresse en ta personne,"

to the accompaniment of a French horn. I abide by the theory that the French horn-player is Timon of Paris. He has seen the hollowness, the ingratitude, the perfidy of the world; and after giving a farewell and dismal banquet to his fair-weather friends in the salon known as the *Grand Seize* at the Café Anglais, and flinging the dishes—which contain nothing but hot water—at their heads, he has retired to an *entresol* in the Rue Je-m'en-fiche-pas-mal, where from year's end to year's end, he nourishes his hatred of mankind, occasionally solacing himself, when the police regulations permit him, by throwing open his window, and driving his neighbours frantic by his performances on the French horn. He is, as a rule, indifferent to the tune which he tortures. I have heard him within the last four days trying "Madame Langlumé," the "Sire de Framboisy," the waltz from *La Fille de Madame Angot*, "Quand j'étais roi," from *Orphée aux Enfers*, the "Chorus of Old Men," from *Faust*, the "Wedding March," the "Chant du Départ," and the "Marseillaise;" and this afternoon, passing down the Rue St. Anne, I heard Timon of Paris, as usual, at the window of his *entresol*, excoriating the graceful melody of "God Bless the Prince of Wales." This performance was, no doubt, highly complimentary to the Prince, still I am glad that Mr. Brinley Richards was not passing at the moment in question. There might have been "a Fite," as Artemus Ward phrased it, between Timon and Apemantus. It is nevertheless amusing to reflect that, even three years since, one might as soon have expected to hear the air of "God Bless the Prince of Wales" as "Hold the Fort" or the "Old Hundredth" played at a Parisian window. Every day seems

to add, to all appearances, to the friendly feeling with which the people of the city of Paris regard the heretofore *perfides Albionnais*. Scores of English words are being imported, not into Academical, but into Boulevard French. Members of "le high life" tell their "ghrooms" to put "le steppeur" into "le T-quart." I heard a French gentleman recently substitute for the French verb *atteler*, to harness, the to me extraordinary term "hicher." "*Mais c'est de l'anglais*," he said to me, apparently surprised at my inability to understand what "hicher" meant. Suddenly I remembered that Americans occasionally "hitch," instead of harnessing, or "putting the horse to" a carriage; and I am not prepared to say that "hitch" is not the tersest and most comprehensive term of the three.

Some thousands of horses were "hitched" to carriages, open and closed, for the benefit of sightseers anxious to witness the illuminations. The omnibuses, moreover, were all crammed inside and outside, the ladies scaling the knife-board in the most gallant manner imaginable. Equally overladen with humanity were the enormous *tapissières* and *chars-à-bancs*, drawn by three horses abreast, which perform *le service de l'Exposition*. These prodigious caravans are of very ancient origin. These indeed were the *Rhedae* in use in Roman Gaul; and you may see the vehicles accurately figured in Mr. Anthony Rich's *Dictionary of Greek and Roman Antiquities*. These ponderous vehicles, owing much of their velocity to their own momentum, usually go "pounding" along at a terrible rate, pulling up for nobody, and occasionally running down and smashing the poor crazy little victorias. But on the night of the illuminations, omnibuses, *tapissières*, and *chars-à-bancs* were all bound to move at a snail's pace, if indeed they could move at all. The block from the Madeleine to the Château d'Eau was almost continuous, and persons who had hired carriages at famine prices were kept for three-quarters of an hour staring at the gas-devices architectonically defining the lines of the huge premises of the Crédit Lyonnais, or half blinded by the electric light in the Avenue de l'Opéra; whereas, had they been on foot, they might have been borne gently in the midst of the best-tempered crowd in the world along the whole

length of the Boulevards. It is a capital thing to take a carriage to see the streets of a great city illuminated, if you can only persuade your neighbours to stay at home or to refrain from hiring carriages. So, I should imagine, a vast number of sightseers thought. As far as the pedestrians were concerned, there were a few ugly crushes and rushes, principally at such always perilous corners as those of the Rue Lafitte, the Rue de la Chaussée d'Antin, and especially the Rue du Faubourg Montmartre; but, on the whole, all things went very smoothly, and I was not more than one hour and three-quarters getting over an amount of pavement space which, under normal conditions, I could have easily perambulated in twenty minutes. Certain of the crowd, not content with tricolour rosettes, which the great majority wore, transformed themselves into itinerant illuminations,



carrying lighted Chinese lanterns in their hands, suspending them to open umbrellas, and even wearing them on their simple heads. With all this, the behaviour of the crowd was, as a rule, simply perfect. Bad language, coarse ribaldry, and brutal horseplay were altogether absent; and it was only towards midnight, when the crowd was thinning, that a few troops of gawky lads began to make themselves obnoxious by tramping along, waving coloured lanterns and yelping the "Marseillaise." They were only the

younger brothers of the gawky lads whom I watched on Boulevards in July 1870, trooping along, and howling at the top of their voices, "*À Berlin, à Berlin!*" Poor gawky lads! A more serious drawback to enjoyment was the incessant discharge from houses in the back streets, or by Gavroches on the pavement, of *pétards*, or squibs and crackers. On the occasion of every popular fête in Paris, horses are terrified and thrown down, and human life and limb endangered, by the reckless discharge of these explosives, which rival in their noxious abundance the squibs and crackers of a 4th of July celebration in New York. It is quite time that the Paris police put the *pétards* down.

Some of my readers will no doubt remember the "aristocratic fête" at poor old Cremorne Gardens? The festival in question, organised by a noble lord of artistic tastes must have taken place (how the time slips by!) nearly twenty years ago. Cremorne was then in its glory; the gardens were exquisitely pretty; the entertainments were varied, sparkling, and attractive; and it occurred to the noble lord that it would be a very nice thing to charter Mr. Simpson's premises for a single evening, form a committee of ladies patronesses, and, by the maintenance of a rigid system of vouchers, exclude all but the *crème de la crème* of society from the bowers, the buffets, the marionette theatre, and the dancing platform for that night only. The festival, harmless and even ingenious in its inception, duly took place. The Brahminical classes came, if not in their thousands, at least in their hundreds, to the Chelsea Casino. There was music, there was dancing; "twenty thousand additional lamps" shone upon fair women and brave men; and all would have gone merry as a marriage bell, only, unfortunately, it poured cats and dogs throughout the evening; and that which should have been an Almack's in the open air was converted into a Festival of Umbrellas in a Carnival of Goloshes.

Fierce downfalls of rain, combined with a furious wind, spoiled a great many things in Paris on the day of the grand reception at Versailles: the flags and Chinese lanterns still left hanging along the boulevards, to wit; to say nothing of the tempers of innumerable promenaders who were overtaken by the showers and

could not get cabs. At Versailles the rain and the wind worked between them even more mischief; and the foulest of foul weather did its best to spoil the magnificent fête given in the palace and gardens of Versailles by the President of the French Republic and Madame la Maréchale de MacMahon, Duchesse de Magenta, to the foreign princes and grandeses sojourning in Paris and the élite of Parisian society. The gardens became one vast morass of mud; the water was ankle-deep in the ill-paved Cour de Marbre; large numbers of ladies had to walk a hundred yards from their carriages to the staircase of entrance; trains were trodden upon; lace scarves were soaked; silk stockings were splashed; back hair came down limp and damp, and gentlemen's white cravats hung pendent with moisture. In the palace the crush was so great that hours were consumed in arriving in the presence of the Maréchale. Stout determined ladies who engaged in the struggle with confidence at the outset often had to abandon it long before they reached the goal. To crown the drawbacks of the evening, the means of exit were so ill-arranged that when the hour of departure

arrived everybody experienced the greatest difficulty in getting away. Ladies waited for long hours together on the staircases and in the vestibules, unable to reach their carriages; while gentlemen sought despairingly for their greatcoats in the confusion that prevailed in the *vestiaire*. The cloak-room arrangements were imperfect; the attendants had "lost their heads;" Ulsters were handed to people who ought to have had Inverness capes, and the lawful owners of overcoats with Astracan collars could not obtain their property at all.

Apropos of this subject, one of the sallies of M. Paul de Cassagnac, during the debate in the Chamber on the motion for invalidating his election, was as humorous as it was hard-hitting. Some disparaging observations on the wasteful expenditure of money on the fêtes given at Compiègne under the Empire having been made by one of his adversaries, M. Paul de Cassagnac at once fired up. "At least," he reported, "when the Emperor gave a ball, he did not confiscate the greatcoats of his guests, as you did the other night at Versailles."





IN THE TEMPLE

November 7

Spruce and comely, new and shining, is the secondhand clothes and furniture mart, known as the "Marché du Temple." Napoleon I contemptuously abandoned the dismantled site of the State prison to the old-clothes men; and for upwards of half a century a space containing some fourteen thousand square feet was occupied by a labyrinth of wooden *baragues* or huts, in which the dirtiest, the noisiest, and the most extortionate of Rag Fairs went on from early morning till sunset. When I told a French friend last evening that I had been to the Temple, he replied deprecatingly, "A quoi bon? It is finished. It is no longer worth seeing. C'est propre; et on n'y fait plus des farces." Yes, I will own that the existing Market of the Temple is as clean as a new pin, and that not the slightest attempt to coerce you into buying anything is made by the merchants doing business there; still, to me, the bustling scene was extremely animated, curious, and amusing. Napoleon III and M. Haussman were fain to deprive the Temple of its picturesque attributes, dirt, disorder, and dishonesty included, just as they were fain to metamorphose the dark and brawling old Marché des Innocents into the present magnificent Halles Centrales. To form an idea of the existing Temple you have only to imagine that you are in the new Smithfield Meat Market, but that the butchers' stalls have been replaced by a multitude of cosy little cabins, some glazed on all sides, displaying the wares which the dealers have to sell; while others are

open stalls, heaped high or hung all round with garments which can be turned over and bargained for at will. This multitude of cabins is roofed in under one lofty dome of iron and glass. The main avenue, stretching at a right angle from the Rue de Temple, is grandly spacious, and there are several cross corridors of convenient breadth; but between many of the blocks of cabins there is only just room for two persons to pass at a time, and you have to run the drollest of gauntlets between the shopkeepers, nine-tenths of whom seem to be women.

Only once before in my life have I heard such a shrill chattering of feminine tongues, and that was on the morning of Sunday, the 4th of September 1870, when, under suspicion of being a Prussian spy, I was the occupant of a dungeon at the Dépôt of the Préfecture of Police. I was "*à la disposition de M. le Préfet*," who had just time, at the kind instance of His Excellency Lord Lyons, to release me when the Revolution broke out, and M. le Préfet had to fly for his life. These are facts which lead me to the inference that there are strange ups and downs in this world, and that man occasionally takes stranger liberties with his fellow-creatures. My cell had a window too high up in the wall for me to peep through the bars; but a good-natured turnkey told me that the window overlooked an immense stone hall, which was the female side of the prison. More than a hundred *pauvres créatures*, as the good-natured turnkey told me, were in this hall, and all of them, so far as the experience of my ears went, were chattering at the top of their voices. It was as though one lived next

door to a colossal aviary full of parrots, macaws, and magpies, with a few crows and ravens thrown in to represent the elder branch of the sisterhood. A closely analogous *tintamarre* was that audible yesterday, in the *Marché du Temple*. "*Madame désire-t-elle un vêtement?*" "*Monsieur cherche-t-il un pardessus?*" Did I want a pair of boots, better than new; pantaloons, of the highest novelty; a corset, six corsets, six dozen corsets, of fashionable elaboration? Would I look at this pink-satin robe, trimmed with black lace? It was worn only a fortnight ago—this was said confidentially, almost in a whisper—by the Duchess de Poulemouillé, at the Versailles fête. Regard this exquisite *toilette de visite* of mauve silk, trimmed with gold beads and embroidery. It formed part—again a shortly confidential communication and a semi-whisper—it formed part of the *défroque* of Mademoiselle Fichesoncamp of the Bouffes Parisiens.

It chanced that I wanted nothing at all just then; but I was content to run the gauntlet of the stallkeepers for full three-quarters of an hour, recalling the humours of Cranbourne Alley in the old days, when irrepressible shopkeepers entreated you to give a look, only one look, at that "sweet little duck of a blue bonnet," or "the beautifullest thing in real Leghorn as ever was seen." Bonnets, I am glad to record, not secondhand but new, were plentiful in the Temple yesterday, and were quoted at extremely moderate prices. A bonnet brave in ribbons was offered to me for five francs; another, with a whole handbox full of artificial flowers upon it, I could have secured for eight twenty-five; and another *chapeau*, decorated with a bird, apparently a tomtit, with outstretched wings, could be had for the ridiculously small sum of eleven francs. And all new bonnets, in the most fashionable style, mind you. Eleven francs for a bonnet; and Mesdames Pauline Millefleurs and Zulma Chapeauchic, of the Boulevard des Capucines and the Rue da la Paix, won't look at me—in the way of a bonnet—under sixty francs. "They would have sold you that eight-franc bonnet in the Temple for five," said my cynical French friend in the evening. It was only a "*décrochez-moi-ça*." Now a "*décrochez-moi-ça*" is a very cheap and "loud" bonnet, hung on a peg in the interior of a cabin in the Temple, for the special

purpose of dazzling the eyes of some feminine customer of the servant-girl of the "Jenny l'Ouvrière" class. When the young lady in question sees and is fascinated by this bonnet, she points with her forefinger to it, and the *marchande* at once construes this movement to "*décrocher*" or remove the desiderated headdress from its peg. Thus a "*décrochez-moi-ça*" has become quite a proverbial locution for a Temple bonnet. To translate it as "Take it off the peg, please," would be very feeble and colourless; and I am of opinion that closest colloquial English equivalent for "*décrochez-moi-ça*" would be "Let's have a squint at it."*

Altogether the *Marché du Temple*, as reconstructed and reorganised under the Second Empire, differs very widely indeed from the dingy Babel so forcibly described by Eugène Sue in the *Mysteries of Paris*—a romance which, notwithstanding all its ethical faults and its melodramatic monstrosities, presents a wonderfully observant and accurate picture of the condition of the working classes in Paris thirty years ago. Eugène Sue, as a student of manners and a word-painter, could be as penetratingly powerful as the extant M. Emile Zola; but he did not choose to be chronically and deliberately revolting, as it seems to the set purpose and delight of the author of *L'Assommoir* to be. It was to the Temple, you will remember, that, in the *Mysteries*, Rodolphe, Grand Duke of Gérolstein, disguised as a simple workman in a blouse, went, accompanied by Rigolette the *grisette*, to purchase a few chattels wherewith to furnish the attic which he had just hired from Madame Pipelet, that never-to-be-forgotten concierge of the house in the Rue du Temple wherein so many fearful mysteries were enacted, and the

* At the time when this particular passage respecting the "*décrochez-moi-ça*" appeared in the *Daily Telegraph*, I received a querulous, and by no means complimentary, letter—of course, it was an anonymous one; abusive people are generally cowards—telling me that "everybody knew" that such articles as were called in the Temple "*décrochez-moi-ça*" were known in the second-hand-clothes world of London as "reach-me-downs." A paragraph to the same effect, but not abusive, subsequently appeared in the *World*. I decline to tamper with the integrity of my text, for the reasons, that I lived in Holywell Street, seven-and-twenty years ago, at the sign of the "Old Dog," a famous tavern long since demolished; that I was on terms of close intimacy with all the old-clothes men of the locality; that I have a tolerably good memory; and that I never heard of a "reach-me-down."

landlord of which was the virtuous M. Bras-Rouge. At the period referred to by the novelist, the secondhand furniture department of the Temple bore a close resemblance to the London Road and the streets in the immediate neighbourhood of the Elephant and Castle. In the old days of imprisonment for debt, the secondhand furniture brokers of this district used to boast of their ability to "furnish out and out" a *détenu*, to whom a room in the Queen's Bench Prison had just been assigned, with all the necessary articles of furniture, bed and bed-linen, crockery, knives, forks, and spoons, and *batterie de cuisine*—all in the brief space of five-and-twenty minutes, and at the moderate rental of ten shillings a week. I have little doubt that, for an additional five shillings, the captive's comfort might have been enhanced and his intellectual wants administered to by a compact picture-gallery and a select library of instructive and entertaining books.

Were the *Marché du Temple* to find its resources taxed under circumstances akin to the foregoing, it would show itself, I am well assured, fully equal to the occasion. The dealers would put "*une jeune personne dans ses meubles*" in less than half an hour. As it is, a complete layette may be procured in the Temple in ten minutes. Do you want furs? The skins of 50,000 cats and rabbits at once leap from their pegs—as the swords of the French chivalry should have leaped from their scabbards to defend Marie Antoinette—crying (the furs, not the swords), "We are real sable; we are all beaver, chinchilla, minx, silver fox, whatever you like to believe." Do you need jackets, mantels, *visites*, waterproofs, they are all to be had here by the thousand. There are dozens of alleys full of hats and caps. There are scores more in which only boots and shoes are vended; and let it be understood that a very large proportion of the merchandise sold in the renovated *Marché du Temple* is quite new. It is only an enormous slop-shop—the Minories, Shoreditch, Tottenham Court Road, and High Holborn all rolled into one, and gathered under one huge vault of glass and iron.

The most interesting portion of this immense bazaar was, I need scarcely say, the old-clothes department. There there was much that might

have interested the philosophic mind of the immortal cogitator of the University of Weissenichtwo; there lay loose, or hung listlessly, a world of fripperies, suggestive of one of the keenest of Béranger's lyrics, "*Vieux habits, vieux galons!*" Room for the Gallican Church! I come across a stall heaped high with ecclesiastical old clothes—"palls and mitres, gold and gew-gaws, fetched from Aaron's wardrobe, or the flamen's vestry"—as Milton disdainfully qualifies the clerical vestments which Laud was striving to introduce into the Church. There is a once sumptuous cope, stiff with embroidery, of which I saw the twin brother only yesterday in one of



the great ecclesiological warehouses in the Rue St. Sulpice. But that cope was brand new, and its sheen was dazzling to look upon. The gold in the vestment in the *Marché du Temple* is tarnished to griminess. Its edges are woefully frayed. The white-silk lining is as dingy as the lining of a pall in the stock of a cheap undertaker. Yet, rubbed up and patched and cobbled a little, it may serve the purpose of some impecunious *curé de campagne*, whose *marguilliers* are not wealthy enough to do much for the fabric of the church which the good priest serves. His reverence may look as fine as fivepence in that *chape* next Easter-day. Albs and rochets, tunics and berettas, stoles and dalmatics, *soutanes* and *rabats*, shovel-hats and skull-caps—all are mingled here in picturesque confusion. Stay, here is at once the grandest and most dilapidated suit in the whole array of sacerdotal old clothes. A swallow-tailed coat, once scarlet in hue, the

shoulders adorned with two bouncing epaulettes, and a plenitude of gold embroidery about the cuffs and collars and pockets; an equally gorgeous waistcoat; a positively astounding *banoulière* of crimson velvet and golden brocade, silk stockings, and small-clothes of the finest kersey-mere; and, finally, a cocked hat of which a Marshall of France or the late Mr. Toole of the India House might have been proud. Stay, there must to these be added a dainty rapier with a gilt hilt and a big gold tassel. Now what can epaulettes and *bandoliers*, a small-sword and a cocked hat, have to do with ecclesiastical vestments? I have heard of the Church Militant; but I knew not that its members arrayed themselves in such a pugnacious-looking panoply as this. But, pondering a moment, I see it all.

Here we have evidently the cast-off *carapace* of a Suisse—the beadle of some fashionable church. How grand he looked on the occasion of an aristocratic marriage! How imposingly solemn was his mien when an aristocratic funeral took place! The *huissier* of the *Administration des Pompes Funèbres* looked, for all his sable garb, the silver buckles on his shoes, and the steel chain of office round his neck, the merest of plebeians by the side of the sumptuous Suisse. The *Marché de la Madeleine* had surrendered its choicest flowers to compose the bouquet which garnished his button-hole. His white-kid gloves—he was a large man, and took nines—fitted him like a second skin. How sonorous was the reverberation of his golden-tipped staff on the marble pavement as he preceded the bridal *cortège*, or the funeral train, from the great west door to the chancel! His whiskers alone, in their blackness and their bushiness, were a sight to see. A few more inches, a little more hirsuteness, and he might have been a drum-major. He was content to remain a beadle. But, ah, the vanity of things mundane! Gold-laced coats and cocked hats will not last for ever; and a Suisse out of elbows is clearly a most unseemly personage. So the *fabriciens* have bought him, it is to be hoped, a new suit; and his abandoned finery has come—whither? Into “the portions of weeds and outworn faces,” into the Slough of Shabby Despond of a secondhand clothes booth in the Temple. Why have I never seen a British beadle’s cocked hat in Dudley-street, Seven Dials? Parish

beadles, it is true, are almost an extinct race, still the Bank of England and many of the City Companies are yet justifiably proud of the beadles they maintain.

Close to the church, as sumptuously represented in the *Marché du Temple*, the stage raises somewhat saucily its head. Priests and players are not yet friends in France. The clergy have not forgotten or forgiven *Le Tartuffe*. The players have not yet forgotten nor forgiven the clergy for their refusal, during the First Restoration, to give Christian burial to the remains of a once popular actress. Happily in the second-hand clothes galleries of the Temple the motley costumes of the greenroom elbow, amicably enough, the bygone wardrobes of the *sacristie*. Did you ever drive down the Toledo at Naples in Carnival time? All the fantastic gear that Callot ever imagined seems to have been brought to light in the masquerade warehouses of the Toledo. The complete accoutrements of scarlet fiends, horns, hoofs, tails, and all; harlequins’ dresses, pierrots’ dresses, are hung out, like banners on the outware walls, while hideous masks grin and leer at you in the windows and from the door-jambs. Abating the masks—I believe that it is a matter of sheer impossibility to turn second-hand pantomime masks to any profitable use, save on Guy Fawkes’-day, when it finds its final cause in the bonfire concluding the festivities—the theatrical booths in the Temple remind one closely of the Neapolitan Toledo. There is the “make-up” of Dr. Dulcamara—portentous jabot, top-boots, scarlet coat, voluminous wig, and all. But, woe is me, how dishevelled and unpowdered is the peruke! Behold the embroidered doublet and *hauts-de-chausses* of Monsieur Jourdain, the *Bourgeois Gentilhomme*. Admire the dressing-gown and nightcap of the *Malade Imaginaire*; and yonder straight-cut *justaucorps* and cloak, black once raven, but now rusty in hue—they must have belonged to Thomas Diafoirus. But in vain do you search for the patched coat, the battered white hat, the prodigious cravat, the bludgeon, and the snuff-box of Robert Macaire. The performance of *L’Auberge des Adrets* is still, I believe, prohibited in France; and rightly so, for the simple reason that the execrable villain, once so admirably impersonated by the late



Frédéric Lemaître, is so replete with humour, and has so many heroic qualities, that in the end the audience are brought to the point of admiring him. Precisely the same reason places the play of Jack Sheppard virtually in the *Index Expurgatorius*.

On the other hand, Mephistophiles is rife in the Temple. Go where you will among the theatrical booths, and you may reckon with tolerable certainty on meeting with the red doublet and hose, the short cloak, and the cap with the cock's feather in it, of the "Esprit qui nie toujours." *Faust*, as an opera or as a drama, is very popular in the provinces in France, and there is a constant demand for Mephistophiles costumes. As for the pierrot and harlequin dresses in the Temple, their name is simply legion; and the same may be said of the coloured satin "trunks"—generally pink or sky-blue—and the silk fleshings which, as personal adornments of ladies who frequent masquerades and who do not wear dominos, have superseded the pretty and scarcely indecorous costume of the *débardeur*, a costume which may be said to have expired with its tasteful illustrator, the incomparable Gavarni. These audacious garments tell their own story, but I may hint that when a *maillot* suit of fleshings is padded, it is technically known as a *confortable*. The Carnival is coming; the masked balls at the Opera and other Parisian theatres will speedily set in; and ere many weeks are over a vast number of young persons who ought to know better will be caper-

ing about in the pink and sky-blue satin "trunks" and tights long after the hour when they should be in bed. The *restaurateurs* of the Boulevards will be doing a roaring trade; and the *jeunesse dorée* of the period will squander, in rather dull and monotonous dissipation, large sums of their own, or of other people's money. At present the masquerading trumpery on the secondhand clothes stalls of the Temple looks grim. Pierrot's white sleeves are smirched with claret stains, or dinted with holes burnt by smouldering cigars fallen from unsteady fingers. The rubbish wants brightening up. It needs the flaring gas to make it look passably attractive. In the daylight it looks simply horrible. *Fini de rire*, Scaramouch. But the Carnival is coming; and Scaramouch, like Paris, will soon be himself again.

Who buy all these play-acting paraphernalia, I wonder? Very small and indigent country managers. The wares are evidently intended for further dramatic use; for the costumes are generally perfect, and you can trace the complete "make-up" of the *père noble*, the *amoureux*, the *ingénue*, and the *premier* and *second comique*. A youth who wished at once to begin his career as a "heavy" or a "light" tragedian, a "walking gentleman" or a "low comedian"—a lady anxious to launch into the "singing chambermaid" or the "breeches parts" line of business—could at once procure all that he or she required in the Temple. It is the Vinegar Yard, the Marquis Court of Paris; but meanwhile Mademoiselle Mimi Pinson of

the Bouffes, or Madame Rhodope Cassemajoue of the "Théâtre du High Life," is paying from fifteen hundred to two thousand francs—to say nothing of her diamonds—for each of the dresses which she orders from her *costumière*. Those radiant robes may have been designed by Marcelin or Grévin, by "Stop" or Pelcoq—the Aldred Thompsons of the French theatres—the robes are beautiful, they are ravishing; they and their much-dizened wearers will be photographed by Nadar or by Reutlinger; the *gommeux* and the *petits crévés* in the stalls will applaud; the *femmes honnêtes* in the boxes will be envious of the dazzling dresses—and their wearers; but the Laws of the Ephemeral are inexorable. "Froufrou" and "Niniche," "Dora" and "Cora," to this complexion you must come at last—to the complexion of the old-clothes pegs; to the booth of a *revendeuse à la toilette* in the Marché du Temple.

Ere I bid farewell to this remarkable Exhibition of Old Clothes, I may remark that the assortment of comic trousers is quite surprising in its abundance and its variety. Never before did I set eyes on such an assemblage of facetious pantaloons. Of course, you know the type of comic trouser. The garment should be, in colour and pattern, what the French paradoxically term *impossible*—that is to say, preposterously and fantastically *outré* and extravagant. Inconceivably absurd plaids, never-before-heard-of stripes or spots, should preferably form the pattern; pea-green, rose-pink, glaring yellow, deep orange, sky-blue, are the colours most adapted to the comic trouser, which should always be too high in the waist and too short in the leg. It may be rendered additionally and indeed irresistibly comic by the introduction of a patch—a large patch of a darker or a lighter colour than that of the original fabric. The patch, moreover, should not be worn in front. Such a comic trouser is good for three rounds of applause on the first appearance of the comedian on the stage. *Experto crede*. I have seen the comic trousers of Vernet and Bouffé, or Grassot and Ravel, or Harley and Keeley, or Wright and Oxberry and Wrench. Very indifferent vaudevilles have ere now been "pulled through," and have at last bloomed into triumphant successes, mainly through the artistic drollery of the

comedian's breeches. Those which I mark in the Temple are generally brand new. A renowned comic actor does not like to part with his trousers. It is not with them as with official uniforms and clerical vestments, which when they grow shabby degrade the wearers. The comic trouser, like vintage wines, acquire character with age. They may be patched and repatched, and the raggeder they grow the more risible they may become. As for the nether garments in the Temple, which are new, they seem



to me to be "reproductions"—copies from some models of comic trousers which had gained celebrity at the Variétés or the Palais Royal. Their purchasers, perchance, are the gentlemen who sing comic songs at the *cafés chantants* and the Alcazars of Paris and the provinces.

Thus while I linger in this Bezesteen of wearing-apparel there comes up before me a vision of the past. I may be standing on the very place of the Chapter House of the Templars of old, who held here their grandest state, till, like their brethren in England, "they decayed through pride." Beneath my very feet the blood of Pichegru may have been shed. Where rises that iron staircase leading to the galleries which surround the old-clothes mart may have risen the donjon's winding stair down which Louis, Antoinette, Elizabeth of France, stepped to their death. The phantoms of Georges Cadoudal and Méhée de la Touche, or Simon the bestial cobbler and the poor little captive king, of Captain Wright and Sir Sidney Smith (that gallant sailor lay long a prisoner in the Temple, and escaped from it in a wonderfully clever and audacious manner), are all around me; but it

is not these historic dead that my fancy conjures up. My vision is only a pair of trousers bought in the Temple five-and-twenty years ago. It was in the early days of the Second Empire. We were a band of young English and American brothers domiciled in Paris—very fond of talking about the pictures we intended to paint, and the novels and plays which we intended to write, and much fonder of amusing ourselves—with material enjoyments when we had any money, with strolling and idling and gossiping when we had none. It so fell that one of our number was favoured, some time during the winter season of 1854, with an invitation to a grand ball to be given by the Prefect of the Seine at the Hôtel de Ville. Evening dress was *de rigueur*. A “claw-hammer coat” and dress waistcoat our friend possessed, but the requisite black pantaloons of fashionable society were lacking. What was to be done? We had all of us the lightest of hearts; but there was not the thinnest pair of sable trousers available among us. So we made a friendly little subscription among ourselves, and our brother was enabled to trudge (fraternally escorted by two judicious brethren lest he should stray into

billiard-playing cafés or spend his *peculium* on rare and ragged editions of the classics on the way) to the Marché du Temple, where, for the sum of twelve francs, he purchased a pair of the blackest and shiniest black trousers that I ever beheld. He went to the ball at the Hôtel de Ville. He danced, he supped, a little too copiously perchance; at all events, a friend who accompanied him on one of his visits to the buffet gently reminded him that he had suffered some warm punch to trickle over the knees of his black dress pantaloons. Promptly our friend produced his handkerchief to remove the unseemly spot of punch. He rubbed and rubbed, but the spot did not disappear. It grew larger, and became at last a brilliant red. In the midst of an ocean of shiny black there was disclosed to his alarmed eyes an island of the pattern and hue of the Royal Stuart tartan. He was wearing a pair of plaid trousers that had been dyed black. Ah, faithless Temple! These trousers were *un plat de ton métier*. But the vision fades away. It leaves me between a smile and a tear, for in the dim distance I seem to see the white headstones of a graveyard.





Flirtation on the Park . Parc Monceau



Au Bois



IN THE BOIS

November 14



ull nine weeks did I pass in Paris, while the World's Fair was at its wildest, without even thinking of taking a carriage-drive in the Bois de Boulogne. There were plenty of amply-sufficing reasons for my not indulging in a to me once-familiar pleasure. In the first place my circle of acquaintances, during the period of which I speak, did not comprise any of those fortunate beings colloquially known as "carriage-people." I had, indeed, no acquaintances at all worth speaking of, beyond the barber, the hotel-clerk, the chambermaid who had been a dragoon, Eugène, a waiter at the Grand Café, and the washerwoman. And she was my bitterest enemy. I might have found plenty of friends. Nobody cut me; but I cut everybody whom I could possibly avoid, in order that I might the better attend to some business I had then in hand. To study the street-life of a great city and to move in polite society are not compatible pursuits, and, for the nonce, I gave polite society the go-by. In the next place, had I wished to take a quiet drive now and again in the Bois, I should have been disappointed; for between mid-August and mid-October there were no *voitures de grande remise* to be hired at any of the livery stables. I shrank from making an appearance at the Cascade or the Avenue de l'Impératrice in a one-horse

shandrydan from the boulevard cab-ranks; and the non-arrival of the necessary cheques precluded me from going to Binder's, and saying to that eminent coachmaker, "Let me have something of your newest and most elegant in the way of a phaeton or a victoria—*quelque chose de joli dans les trois mille francs comptant*." As it chanced, there came to Paris, during the last days of the fair, a friend who was fortunate enough to secure, by the week, at Meurice's, a very comely barouche and pair. It was the only available turn-out, they said, left in Paris, except one which had been hired by the Minister from Madagascar to convey his Excellency to the fête at Versailles. Nor barouche nor Minister ever came back; and the hapless diplomatist and his Secretary of Legation are, it is supposed, still wandering up and down in search of their great-coats, while the coachman from Meurice's is waiting for his fare in the midst of the Plain of Satory.

So I had my drive in the Bois after all. A very fine afternoon in the first week of November. It was the close of that exceptional surcease from climatic asperity known as St. Martin's Summer. The Americans have their "Indian Summer," a respite from winter almost as sunshiny and as mellow as *l'Été de St. Martin*, who, by the way, fulfils in France the functions attributed to St. Michael, in being the patron

saint of geese. In the old *livres d'images* of Épinal, St. Martin is always represented with a nimbus of geese round his head; and on his fête roast goose makes its appearance at the tables of the French bourgeoisie as regularly as it does with us at Michaelmas. Another knock-down blow to the tradition that Queen Elizabeth was dining on hot roast goose when the news of the destruction of the Spanish Armada was brought to her. *L'Été de St. Martin* made the Bois look very lovely indeed. Ascending the Champs Élysées, and crossing the Place de l'Étoile, I found the coquettish little houses built à l'Anglaise in the Avenue de l'Impératrice wearing their most smiling aspect; and the eight thousand trees and shrubs which the massifs of the Avenue are said to contain showed in the afternoon sunshine but very few signs of the sere, the yellow leaf. Far off in the blue distance loomed the fortress of Mont Valérien and the hills of St. Cloud, of Bellevue, and of Meudon. Entering the Bois by the Porte Dauphine, we followed the Route du Lac to the Lower Lake, with its pine-clad banks and its two pretty little eyots; and then we drove to the Upper Lake, with its splendid cascade. Then the Rone de la Source, the Butte Mortemart, and the Mare d'Auteuil, were all visited in due course. The Pré Catelan looked as handsome as ever; and at length we reached the Hippodrome of Longchamp, with its racecourse, its windmill, and its gray old *tour à pignon*, the last remaining vestige of the once-famous Abbey of Longchamp, founded in the middle of the thirteenth century by Isabella of France, sister of St. Louis, and which endured until the great revolutionary cataclysm of 1789.

Never was there a more aristocratic, or, if the *chronique scandaleuse* is to be believed, a naughtier nunnery than that of Longchamp. It was Rabelais' Abbey of Thélème, with additions and emendations, and "*Fay ce que voudras*" might have been written over the conventual gates. The excellent St. Vincent de Paul was in a terrible way about the "goings on" among these exceptionally vivacious nuns, and in a letter to Cardinal Mazarin indignantly denounced the irregularities which had become habitual in the establishment. The Archbishop of Paris remonstrated with the naughty nuns; but they snapped

their fingers metaphorically in the archiepiscopal face, and continued their fandangos. But they were eventually punished for their peccadillos. The pious world ceased in disgust to make pilgrimages to the tomb of Ste. Isabelle de Longchamp, and to deposit rich offerings on her shrine. At the beginning of the eighteenth century the convent had grown comparatively poor, when, in 1727, a renowned opera-singer Mademoiselle le Maure, having taken the veil at Longchamp, the happy thought occurred to the abbess of giving concerts of sacred music on the three last days of Lent. These concerts were a prodigious success. The Parisian world, fashionable and frivolous as well as devout, flocked, as fast as their coaches-and-sixes could carry them, to hear the Longchamp oratorios; and these concerts remained in vogue for nearly fifty years. It came at last to the ears of another Archbishop of Paris, Monseigneur Christophe de Beaumont—a prelate celebrated for his enmity to theatrical entertainments, and his quarrel with Jean Jacques Rousseau—that the attractions of the choir at the Abbey of Longchamp were enhanced by the voices of a number of *artistes* from the opera who had not taken the veil. So the church was closed to the public. There was an end of the cause, but the effect remained.

Out of the fashionable pilgrimages grew the world-famous Promenade de Longchamp, which began in the Champs Élysées, and wound its course right athwart the Bois de Boulogne to the gates of the Abbey itself. It was found that the setting-in of the spring fashions might be fitly made to coincide with the eve of Easter; and every year during three days in Passion-week there was an incessant cavalcade of princes, nobles, bankers, *fermiers-généraux*, strangers of distinction, and the ladies then known as *ruineuses*, to Longchamp. It became not a Ladies' Mile, but a Ladies' League. The equipages of the grandest dames of the Court of Versailles locked wheels with the chariots of La Duthé and La Guimard; and the legends whisper that the *ruineuses* made, as a rule, a much more splendid appearance than the *grandes dames* did. The Duchess of Valentinois was not, however, to be put down by "*ces créatures*." In the spring of 1780 her Grace appeared at the Promenade de Longchamp in a carriage of which the

panels were composed of superbly-painted Sèvres porcelain. This china coach was drawn by six mottle-gray horses, with harness of crimson silk embroidered with silver. A famous *ruineuse*, La Morphise, an actress "protected" by Louis XV, and whose son, by her Royal protector, Beaufranchet, Comte d'Oyat, was afterwards present as chief of the staff of the Army of Paris at the execution of Louis XVI, and positively gave the command for the drums to beat when his unhappy grand-nephew by blood attempted to address the spectators—La Morphise; I say, endeavoured to outshine the Duchess of the porcelain coach. She was unable to procure any china panels from the Royal manufactory at Sèvres, but she had the sides and back of her carriage made of the finest marqueterie in brass work and tortoiseshell. Her horses were black, with harness of crimson velvet and gold. The equipage would have been a success had not the coachman of the Swedish Minister run the pole of his chariot through one of the panels of the tortoiseshell coach. The fiasco was complete; the crowd began to jeer, and the discomfited Morphise drove home lamenting.

I had plenty of time to recall this, as well as many other reminiscences of the Bois de Boulogne, since we had made the slight mistake of going thither at two o'clock in the afternoon, at least an hour and a half too early. The time for the fashionable promenade was, at the beginning of the month, from half-past three to five p.m. There was scarcely anybody on wheels or on horseback in the Bois when we arrived; thus the aspect of the place, for all the mild beauty of St. Martin's summer, was decidedly the reverse of hilarious. A slight halt for refreshment being suggested, I proposed that we should partake of a picturesque and innocent beverage—new milk, to wit, at the well-known farm close to the Pré Catelan. We duly entered the somewhat tame and frigid imitation of a farmhouse, which has a most melancholy little café attached to it, and in the yard of which a dejected horse walks round and round in a seemingly ceaseless circuit. You have, at first, not the slightest idea as to why he should be so very peripatetic; but soon you are taken into an outhouse, and there you perceive that the quadruped in the farmyard

is working a wheel which works a machine for grinding horse-chestnuts or chopping mangold-wurzel and carrots. After that we were taken to see cows. Here the conventional etiquette is to quote at least one verse from Pierre Dupont's lyric of "Les Bœufs:"

"J'ai deux grands bœufs dans mon étable,
Deux grands bœufs blancs tachés de roux;
Le timon est en bois d'érable,
L'aiguillon en tranche de houx."

There were a few big oxen in the enormous cowshed of the Ferme du Pré Catelan—a cowshed on which that eminent agricultural reformer, Hercules, might have advantageously bestowed a glance after making the stables of King Augeas neat and tidy; but there were, in addition, about a hundred poverty-stricken little Alderneys. Some of these were being milked by bearded men in blouses and with bare feet. This did not look by any means picturesque, and failed to conjure up memories of the charming old English lyric about the lass "that carried the milking-pail."

A paved aisle ran between the vaccine ranks, and at intervals in this gangway were little



tables, at which sate, on three-legged stools, M. Joseph Prudhomme, *rentier*, of the Marais; M. Cassonnade, of Noisy-le-Sec, *épiciier*; and M. Choufleury, Mayor of Château-Pignouf, Department of the Ganache Supérieure; with any number of feminine and juvenile Prudhommes, Choufleurys, and Cassonnades, all drinking new milk with a sorrowful but determined expression of countenance. I always endeavour in my

wanderings to "see the Elephant," and at Rome to do as the Romans do; so, regardless of consequences, I ordered new milk for four; but the lady of our party beginning at this conjuncture to "feel bad"—the odour of the Catelan cow-house may have had something to do with it—we prudently withdrew to the café. The milk was peculiar in flavour, but scarcely nice. That was not the name for it. In the café we found some coffee, which tasted worse than the milk, and some cognac, which tasted worse than either. The microscopic nature of the change out of a five-franc piece, tendered in payment for these delicacies, excited, however, our admiration; and it was something, after all, to be reminded, in the very outskirts of Paris, of that dear old Dutch deception, the "clean" village of Broek. So farewell, Arcadia, which I have generally found to be a very expensive country.

When we got back to the Bois we found it, not certainly in all its glory, but fairly well patronised by the equipages of the fashionable world. The French aristocracy seemed rather to shine by its absence than otherwise. The Duchess and Marchionesses had perhaps not yet returned from Biarritz or Vichy, or from their châteaux; but there was a very considerable sprinkling indeed in handsome equipages of *la haute finance*, of foreign diplomacy, and especially of the *haute commerce*. The wealthy tradesman—the enriched chocolate, cognac, pickles, sago, cooking-stove, corset, pills, perfumery, confectionery manufacturer, or what not—seems to be coming very rapidly to the front just now, and to be making as conspicuous an appearance in society under the Republic as his congeners did under the Monarchy of Louis Philippe. The Second Empire was the time of triumph in the Bois, as everywhere else, of splendid adventurers of both sexes, and of every possible description; and I am bound to confess that, ten years ago, the aspect of the Bois du Boulogne was far more stylish than it is at present. There was a tremendous amount of extravagance; still luxury did not often reach the "Benoiton" point of ostentatious vulgarity. The cattle seen in the Bois in 1867-8 were, as a rule, superb. Very rarely now do you see in it a horse worth as much as a hundred-pound note. There have been no good horses in Paris, they

tell you, since the siege. The driving, too, seems to have wofully deteriorated; a fact which, I consider, is not at all to be wondered at. Poor Napoleon III, whatever may have been his shortcomings, certainly knew the "points" of a horse, as Mr. Samuel Sidney or as "Stonehenge" knows them. Cæsar defunct was an eminently "horsey" sovereign, and his stud-grooms were Englishmen. The wealthiest and "horsiest" of foreign grandes flocked to the brilliant Court of the Tuileries, and *ruineuses* of ten years since—they were called *cocottes* then—vied in the splendour of their equipages



with the great ladies of the Empire and the foreign Ambassadors, just as, a century ago, La Morphise vied with the Duchess of Valentinois. All that is "played out." The Duthés and Guimards and Morphises of the Second Empire seem all but entirely to have disappeared. They may be keeping *bureaux de tabac*,

or opening box-doors at the playhouse, or waiting in white aprons at the Bouillon-Duval, for aught I know; and in the Bois de Boulogne I failed to count more than a dozen *calèches* or victorias, occupied by unmistakably yellow-haired enchantresses. There was one on horse-back in the Avenue de Suresnes; but she was stout, and forty. O, "stylishness" of the Bois, what has become of thee? On the other hand, there was an abundance of exquisitely-neat little private broughams and coupés, with quiet-looking ladies and gentlemen inside; a number of very badly appointed and worse driven dog-carts and T-carts, two or three mail-phætons, a solitary tandem, and any numbers of right-down fiacres and shandrydans, full of honest folk from the provinces, enjoying themselves to

all appearance mightily. It were better—much better so. True the quality of the cattle in the Bois de Boulogne improved; but a little stylishness may be perhaps dispensed with when the owners of the most stylish equipages are reckless adventurers, mushroom millionaires, or the young ladies with tresses of convertible hues who were wont to be called *ruineuses*, and who in successive generations, from the time of Lais and Phryne downwards, have ruined a surprising number of silly people.

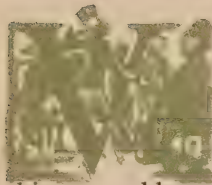
And now farewell, Bois; and farewell, Paris, too, for a time; for my boat is on the shore and my bark is on the sea; that is to say, I have got a through ticket to London, and I have an appointment tomorrow at noon at Charing Cross.





PARIS REVISITED—PALM SUNDAY ON THE BOULEVARD

April 7, 1879



"*oilà, patron!*" In these words of cheerful deference was I addressed, soon after my arrival in Paris yesterday morning, by the red-waistcoated and oil-skin-covered-hatted driver of hackney-carriage No. Five Thousand and odd, stationed on the Boulevard des Italiens. Cocher Five Thousand and odd absolutely wanted a fare, and condescended to make courteous proclamation of the circumstance. Bear in mind that he hailed me as "*patron!*" Under normal circumstances the Parisian cabby declines to apply to his fare a more dignified designation than that of "*mon bourgeois,*" and too frequently during the Exhibition orgy of extortion "*mon bourgeois*" became "*Ohè! là-bas!*" I have been called likewise "*chameau,*" "*animal,*" and "*requin;*" and one Jehu, with whom I had a slight difficulty arising from his demanding four francs fifty centimes for driving me from the Port Rapp to the Luxembourg, was good enough to express his opinion that I was "*un exposant de peaux d'hippopotame*" — an exhibitor of hippopotamus hides. There was some mother-wit in the abuse, and I forgave it. But no cabman vilifies the wandering tourist now. The hackney carriages are many, and the fares are few. The times have changed, and Paris is herself again. Aha! The proud Automedon of the asphalte defers to me as his "*patron,*" does he! I mean to be as haughty as he was between mid-July and mid-October last year. I shall tolerate no overcharges, and wink at no sin of omission in the delivery of a ticket on

his part. In fact, like Mr. Pepys, when he put on his suit with the gold buttons, I intend in the future to "*go like myself,*" to patronise only coupés with unbroken windows and untattered cushions, and to ride only behind cattle that are not spavined, windgalled, and shoulder-shotten. It is slightly difficult to find such irreproachable animals on the Parisian cab-ranks; still, I have a fortnight before me, and the stud to select from is large.

Yesterday was Palm Sunday—*le Dimanche des Rameaux*—and I had no sooner emerged from the Northern Terminus into the interminable Rue de Lafayette, the Upper Wigmore Street of Lutetia, ere I became aware that the first day of Holy Week had begun. The streets were all agreen with branches of box-tree—the Western substitute for palms. By this time millions of *faisceaux* of the *buis bénit*, blessed yesterday in the churches, have been hung up over the chimneypieces or thrust behind the frames of pictures and looking-glasses, not to be disturbed until the eve of another Palm Sunday. A pretty custom. We are too much in a hurry, perhaps, in England, when Christmas week is over, to sweep the holly and mistletoe into the dustbin; but if paterfamilias pleads for a little extension of time for the crisp green leaves and sparkling berries, the careful housewife sternly pronounces the ominous word "*dust!*" We are the slaves, in smoky London, of the dust and "*the blacks.*" Here there is little dust worth speaking of; and there are no "*blacks*" at all. Thus the Parisians will be enabled to indulge to the fullest in their passion

for perpetuating the verdant memories of Palm Sunday.

Prodigious quantities of leafy box arrived at the Halles Centrales by dawn on Sunday, and by seven in the morning had been dispersed through every quarter of Paris. The *grisette* trotted by, with her long slim loaf—her provision of bread for the day—held, not ungracefully, sceptre-wise in one hand; her little can of milk pendent from one finger; and in the other hand her morsel of *fromage de Brie*, wrapped up in paper; and, secure under her arm, her bunch of *rameaux*. She would not much mind going without her breakfast, poor thing; but those fascies of green stuff she must have. So do you see crowds of working men's wives and children trooping onwards, all laden with branches of *buis*. Birnam Wood seems coming to Dunsinane. Impromptu *marchands de rameaux* establish themselves at all the street-corners, while the regular greengroceries seem to be doing almost as good a business in *buis* as in cauliflowers and cabbages. They tell me that the French workman is, in the majority of cases, a confirmed sceptic, and this statement would appear to be to some extent confirmed by the vast number of freethinking halfpenny and penny newspapers and periodicals which are Voltairian, and something more than Voltairian, in their views; but, all sceptic as he may be, the Parisian proletarian does not, to all appearance, entertain the slightest objection to his wife and children purchasing box-branches on Palm Sunday, and decorating the family *mansarde* therewith. One reason for this may be that in matters social the proletarian in question is a very staunch Conservative. He abhors innovation, and likes to do as his fathers did before him. He may sneer at the observances of the *Dimanche des Rameaux* as "*un tas de bêtises*;" yet, I fancy, he would rate Marie Jeanne his wife, and Nanette and Louison his daughters, if the traditional branches of *buis*, duly blessed by the curé, whom he professes to hate so much, were not to make their accustomed appearance over the chimney or behind the portrait of M. Gambetta on Monday in Passion-week. The portrait of M. Léon Gambetta, lithographed, photographed, graved on steel, or cut on wood, is everywhere in Paris just now. He is enjoying, pictorially, an Admiral

Keppel, a Marquis of Granby-like apotheosis. Republican France is continually drinking toasts to Liberty, Equality, and Fraternity at the sign of Gambetta's Head. What was it that the Tory old lady was heard to mutter one day as she passed a tavern, the sign of which displayed a flaring effigy of Jack Wilkes crowned with the Cap of Liberty? "He swings," remarked the Tory old lady, "everywhere but where he should."

There may be in Republican France not a few politicians who hold the same opinion with regard to the omnipresent portrait of the President of the Chamber of Deputies as was held by the elderly gentlewoman of Church and State proclivities touching the head of Jack Wilkes. What the newest of the brand-new journals, which are well-nigh incessantly sprouting up, thinks about the First Statesman in France—the statesman who M. Thiers dubbed "*un fou furieux*"—is problematical. The new journal of which I speak is called Gallia. It is not a penny paper—O dear, no! It is sold at the patrician sum of 50 centimes, and comprises only four pages of very widely-displayed type, mainly devoted to a puff of a new *Album de d'Exposition*. But on the front page is gummed a cloudy little photograph representing the exterior of a humble grocer's shop in a provincial town. The door-jambs are embellished with counterfeit presentments of sugarloaves. In the window appear pickles, haricots, lentils, cakes of chocolate, vermicelli, olives, and other *denrées coloniales*. Over the shop-front appears a capacious placard inscribed *Bazar Gênois: Gambetta Jeune et Cie.*; and beneath the spectator reads, *Sucre de Havre, Nantes et Bordeaux, 1fr. le k.*, meaning one franc the kilogramme. This curious picture the accompanying letterpress informs the reader represents *La Maison de Gambetta à Cahors*; and the unpretending grocery is other wise pompously styled *Le Nid de l'Aigle*—the Eagle's Nest. Is all this good-natured banter, or honest admiration for a man who from such small beginnings has risen so high; or is it so much black and bitter envy, malice, and uncharitableness? That would be difficult to determine. I never knew political satire of the pictorial kind to be so savagely spiteful as it is in France just now; and the Cahors grocery photo-

graph may be deemed a master-stroke by politicians who hate M. Gambetta. It does not matter much, perhaps, after all. Garibaldi used to make candles, once upon a time, at Staten Island, New York; and Hofer, the Tell of the Tyrol, kept a public house. When a millionaire chocolate manufacturer was taunted in full Chamber by a Bonapartist Deputy with having formerly been a country grocer, on the very smallest of scales, he replied that such was certainly the fact; and that the father of the honourable gentleman had been a customer of his, and had forgotten to settle his small account for Réunion coffee and Jamaica rum.



Meanwhile, the pleasure-loving Parisians have been spending Palm Sunday in their characteristic fashion. I fancy that the churches of London were all most decorously well attended yesterday, and that the last week in Lent left nothing to be desired in the way of devout observance. Otherwise, if you in England were afflicted with such remarkably disagreeable weather as we suffered yesterday, I fancy, again, that your Palm Sunday must have been socially an intensely dull and dreary one. It was otherwise here. The barometer, meteorologically, went down; but the spirits of this most mercurial population went up. They made a day of it, miserable as it was. The devout spent the season in their own way. There were matin and vesper sermons by friars of great oratorical eminence at Notre Dame. The fires of Lacordaire and Hyacinthe yet live, it is asserted, in the ashes of the French pulpit; and in the religious journals you

read of nascent Massillons and coming Bourdaloues, of Fléchiers, hitherto unknown to fame, and even of a new Bossuet hourly expected to recall the thunders of the Eagle of Meaux. Religious concerts at the Sainte Chapelle are greatly in vogue, and the Lenten congregations at St. Germain l'Auxerrois, St. Etienne du Mont, and especially at Notre Dame des Victoires are crowded. The *offices* at the Madeleine are frequent and superb, and of some of these ere Easter Eve arrives I shall endeavour to take note. In fact, devotional, orthodox, "practising" Paris presents just at present a most edifying spectacle. Society *fait la morte*. No balls, no assemblies, no grand dinners. Half mourning is the only wear, and *maigre* ostensibly the only cheer.

Foreigners, being barbarians, may of course eat what they like; but it will not be at all *mauvais ton*, should you happen to be dining at Bignon's or Durand's on Maundy Thursday or Good Friday to abstain from ordering any *plat de viande*. You can, to be sure, get on tolerably well, gastronomically speaking, without partaking of either butcher's meat or poultry. Here is, for example, a Good Friday menu, highly recommended in the most exclusive circles of the Faubourg St. Germain, and composed without the aid either of milk, butter, or eggs, all being things prohibited in his Eminence the Cardinal Archbishop's Lenten Pastoral. *Potage bouillabaisse*; flounders *sauce à l'huile*, salmi of wild duck, lobster à l'Americaine, roast teal, *buisson* of crawfish, *croûte* of mushrooms, *parfait glacé au café*. Yes, I think that it might be found possible to support existence on such a Good Friday diet as the one just formulated. But how about the *sarcelles* and the *canards sauvages*? you may ask. Are salmi of wild duck, are roast teal, "meagre" fare? Surely they are. They are aquatic birds, they feed on fish, they have a slightly fishy flavour, and in the Lenten menu they are not accounted flesh. This remarkable discovery was made by a celebrated gastronome of the seventeenth century, Monsieur de Tartuffe.

And the Paris which is not devout? Well, that Paris was singing on Palm Sunday—was singing its accustomed refrain, "Let us eat, drink, and be merry, for tomorrow may come Cataclysm." "It must be admitted, Monsieur," quoth to me, yesterday, the sententious and courteous

maître d'hôtel at the Grand Café—I can't help thinking that he must have been an *Auditeur de la Cour des Comptes* under the Second Empire—"that our coffers are no longer gorged, as was the case during the *Exposition*, with the gold of the stranger, and that foreigners no longer dispute with fierceness for the possession of the treasures of art and industry in our commercial establishments. But, Monsieur, *il y a toujours le Paris qui suffit à faire marcher Paris*—the Paris which is the adequate patron of its own productions, and which continues to enjoy with neverfailing zest the permanent phenomena of its daily life. Paris, at the present moment, is even more inimitably metropolitan than was the case during the fever of the *Exposition* for during those months of clamorous (*bruyante*) prosperity the true Parisian, terrified (*effarouché*) by abnormal prices and the scarcity of fish, emigrated, or hid his head in silence and obscurity, until more tranquil times should come. Monsieur, they have arrived. The *carte du jour*, Monsieur, comprises—"and then he slid off into the recital of his catalogue of eatables. It was not he, but the equally courteous Eugène, the head-waiter, who, when I was bidding him farewell last November, opined that I was going to get some money out of my "*mines de houille là-bas*," and that I should speedily return to Paris to spend it. It is a firm article of belief among the Parisian shop and restaurant keeping class that no foreigner ever thinks of leaving Paris until he is brought down to his last hundred-franc note. But who on earth could have told Eugène, or how came that obliging servitor to think, that I was a coal-owner *là-bas*? *Là-bas* may mean Durham or Dalmatia, Pontypridd or Pennsylvania. It is the "There" of the O'Mulligan. It is the Frenchman's *Ewigkeit*.

There were races yesterday in the Bois de Boulogne. I glanced at the prophesied list of winners—the "*Gagnants de Robert Milton*,"—in the *Figaro*, but M. Robert Milton's straight tips failed to interest me. A horse-race in France is, as a rule, a depressing spectacle. I have never returned from one save in a most dejected state; and even Chantilly—on a wet Sunday—has moved me well-nigh to tears. There was a bitter wind blowing yesterday; the rain came down from

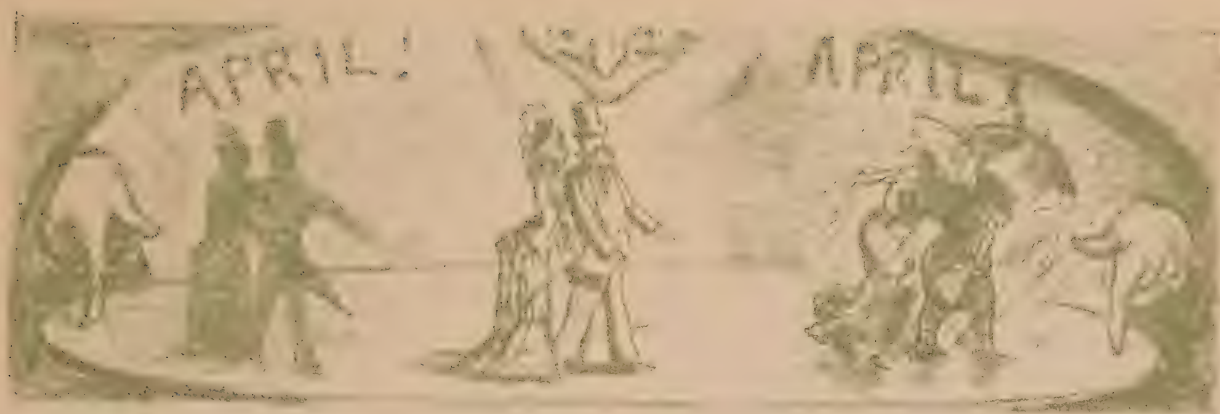
half-hour to half-hour in brief but uncomfortable "splurges;" and altogether I did not see my way towards becoming, even for a portion of the afternoon, a patron of the turf. So it occurred to me that I would visit the Louvre. I averted my eyes—with a definite intent and purpose in so doing—as, driving down the Rue de Rivoli, the blackened, ruined screen of the Tuileries loomed in view. *A riverderla!* But in the great court of the Carrousel, and in the Square de Louvre, with its gilt railings and almost preternaturally verdant turf, all looked spick-and-span new, bright, handsome, and coquettish. A melodious voice seemed to be making some such proclamation as this: "Ladies and gentlemen, in other portions of Paris disturbances have occasionally broken out; but these smiling façades, these stately galleries, are sacred to the Muses, and no revolutions can, under any possible circumstances, be permitted here." Really! Why, the vast pile is built on a bed of concrete covering revolt and massacre unutterable. I fell into the ranks of a dense, but most orderly throng, who were scaling the grand staircase of the Museum. I found the due contingent of civil and attentive guardians, in their traditional cocked hats; but I was pleased to see that under a Republican régime the sovereign people were no longer deprived of their sticks and umbrellas at the door. What Frenchman in his senses would ever dream of poking at a picture with his *parapluie*, or of digging holes in a terra-cotta with the ferrule of his walking-cane? To sack the Tuileries now and again, to burn down the library of the Louvre bodily, to *faire flamber Finances*—Eh! that is quite another matter. But the volcano is not in eruption just now, the lava and the *scoriae* under the concrete are for the moment quiescent; and on Palm Sunday afternoon the incomparably magnificent art-galleries of the Louvre were thronged by a vast multitude of Frenchmen who knew how to behave themselves, and did so most scrupulously.

It was a "People's Day," but the attendance was by no means exclusively democratic. I counted in the courtyard no less than twenty-seven handsome private equipages, and a much larger number of hackney carriages retained by the hour by pleasure-seekers. Many of these

were possibly foreign tourists; still I noticed a fair sprinkling of grave elderly gentlemen, wearing the ribbon of the Legion of Honour, of cadets of St. Cyr, and of students of the Ecole Polytechnique. There were scarcely any fashionably-dressed ladies. They were probably at church; while the *mondaines* were at the races, or driving in the Bois. Not a *gandin*, not a *petit crêvé*, not a *gommeux*, was to be seen. On the other hand, the affluence was tremendous of *petites bourgeoises*, of good folk of the shop-keeping class, of clerk and assistant-like young men, and of downright working men and women—the former in shiny blue blouses, the latter in decent white caps. I say that the blouses were shiny, because Palm Sunday is a traditional day among the working classes for the assumption of a new blouse, which is normally of blue or white calico, highly glazed, and to my mind is a very becoming garment. When he is at work the artisan wears a white blouse; and hundreds of *blouses blanches* were going up and down ladders, mixing mortar, laying bricks, or plying their plasterers' brushes in Paris yesterday. My neighbour, M. Barbédienne, of art-bronze fame, never opens his establishment on the Sabbath, but he had a whole army of *blouses blanches* employed on Palm Sunday in "doing up" his extensive frontage.

A much larger number, indeed, of the shops on the Boulevards, in the Rue de la Paix, and in the Avenue de l'Opéra were closed yesterday than is ordinarily the case; but I scarcely think that the crowds of young men and women thus temporarily liberated from their toils at the counter and the desk contributed in any material degree to swell the congregation at St. Germain l'Auxerrois or St. Etienne du Mont. I shrewdly suspect that vast numbers of them went to the Louvre, and so, subsequently, to dinner at an *Etablissement de Bouillon Duval*, and afterwards to a brasserie, and ultimately to a café concert or to the play. It is no doubt a very dreadful thing, this "Continental Sunday," about which we hear in England such doleful jeremiads, but there is no getting over one fact—that the crowd in the galleries of the Louvre was a quiet crowd, a well-behaved crowd, and a crowd that seemed thoroughly to enjoy itself. When in the Salon Carré I saw a whole working-class household, nurse-girl—carrying the baby—and all, pass with rapt and eager looks from the *Nozze di Cana* of Paolo Veronese to the Soult Murillo, and thence to the *Belle Jardinière* of Rafaelle, before which they stood as it were fascinated by a vision of grace and loveliness, I could not help thinking that there were features in the "Continental Sunday" which might, on consideration, be condoned.





EASTER EGGS AND APRIL FISHES

April 9



It might surprise you to hear that this instant Wednesday is, so far as Paris is concerned, the Eve of the Deluge. The forecast in which I am emboldened to indulge should be taken, not in a meteorological, but in a metaphorical, sense. It has done so many things in the way of weather since Sunday morning last, and fog has succeeded brief snatches of sunshine, while piercing east winds have followed drenching downpours of rain—all in the course of each recurring twenty-four hours—that it would be perilous to predict what kind of fresh atmospheric phenomenon to-morrow may bring forth. To-day may be the eve of a snowstorm or of a flood, of a sirocco or of an earthquake. The month is April; and we should be prepared for all things. But the Deluge on the occurrence of which to-morrow I am able, with tolerable confidence, to reckon, has no kind of reference to the voyage of the good ship Noah's Ark. Paris is simply expectant of a Deluge of juvenile humanity, and the Parisian shopkeepers are rubbing their hands at the thought of their establishments being inundated by streams of little boys and girls, almost frantically eager for toys and sweetmeats to be bestowed upon them. The Easter holidays, scholastically speaking, are very brief in Paris. The great colleges only grant three days' vacation to their students; private schools for boys give four days' surcease from lessons; the *pen-sionnats de demoiselles* are a little more lenient

to their pupils; but the authorities of the conventual schools refuse to regard Holy Thursday and Good Friday as holidays—they are, on the contrary, days of mortification and seclusion from secular recreation. Holy Saturday is a day of preparation for the coming festival, and the real holiday is Easter-day, next Sunday. Then, and not until then—to the thinking of the orthodox, should one *commence de faire ses Pâques*, to eat, drink, and be merry; and, under a strictly orthodox régime, festivity would be carried right through Easter-week. The existing generation is, however, heterodox, and in a chronic state of hurry. With a vast mass of the population of Paris the Easter Holidays have already begun, and by Easter Tuesday those holidays will have ended. The majority of the schools will throw open their portals to-morrow afternoon, and the Deluge of small Parisians of both sexes will be tremendous.

The "movement," as the commercial journals put it, in the toy and sweetstuff trade has thus been prodigious; but concurrent with the need of providing for the requirements of the children who are coming home from school is the large amount of business done in the two characteristic specialties of the season—April Fishes and Easter Eggs. The *Poisson d'Avril*, in the form of a pretty trifle sent as a half-complimentary, half-bantering present, is all but wholly unknown in England out of the domains of mediæval folklore. Idiotic or malicious practical jokes are yet perpetrated among the uneducated classes on

the 1st of April; and "O, you April Fool!" is an expression which is not yet entirely divested of purport or significance; but in good society to "make an April Fool" of any one would be considered an anachronism as gross as it would be to attempt the revival of the Berners Street Hoax. The *Poisson d'Avril* has long since lost its coarseness in Paris, in the direction of "fooling" or "hoaxing" people; but it has assumed a tangible form as a half valentine, half *étrenne*. It may be sent anonymously; whereas the Easter Egg and the New Year's gift are personal gifts. The *Poisson d'Avril* may be in bonbons, in chocolate, in porcelain, in lace, in *terre cuite*, in diamonds, or in cardboard; but it is imperatively necessary either that its outward shape should be that of a fish, or that it should be plentifully adorned with piscine emblems. These dolls, in the manufacture of which the Parisians are so surprisingly proficient, lend themselves at once to the purposes of adaptation for the April Fish whim. A miniature *mulier formosa* is so contrived as to terminate with a fish's tail stuffed with comfits, without exciting the ridicule of the recipient; and troubadours playing on guitars, and with cods' heads and shoulders, have been especial favourites in the April Fish market this season. The *Fille de Madame Angot*, carrying a basket full of sprats, has also been much in vogue; while *confiseurs* of more classical leanings have brought out radiant presentments of Arion on his dolphin, and Domitian's turbot, splendidly got up in chocolate, mother-o'-pearl, blanched almonds, and *marrons glacés*. I note also a youth, unrobed, with wings, sitting in the bright vermilion jaws of a kind of sea-dragon, equally resembling a diminutive shark and a colossal flying-fish. The youth is playing on a harp, and to all appearance is very happy. Can this group have any reference to the story of Jonah and the whale?

Take him for all in all, the *Poisson d'Avril* may be accepted as the light and mercurial precursor of the more serious and substantial *Oeuf de Pâques*, in the dazzling splendours of which the modest fish soon becomes blended, and is ultimately absorbed. An Easter Egg of the very highest class is not, I would have you to understand, by any means a joke. When the Second Empire was at the heyday of its luxurious folly

and its sumptuous corruption there were Easter Eggs that cost 50,000, or 25,000, or 10,000 francs apiece. I remember to have heard of one presented by a Viscount and Chamberlain of the Imperial Court to an actress, say at the theatre of *les Dépravations Parisiennes*, which exteriorly was only a coffer of ovoid form, covered with blue velvet powdered with hearts transfixed by arrows in gold embroidery, but which, opening, disclosed a charming victoria of Binder's building, a pair of perfectly matched piebald ponies, and a Bengal tiger—a groom I mean—in faultless tunic, tops, and buckskins. The ponies and the groom were alive, the victoria was fit for immediate use, and Mademoiselle Pasgrandchose drove her piebald pair that very afternoon at the Promenade de Longchamp. The brilliance of her appearance was heightened by the contents of another egg, the yolk of which was composed of pearls and diamonds, the gift of Baron Roguet de la Poguerie, banker and Mexican loanmonger—he fell with Mirès on the field of honour—while further attractiveness was lent to Mademoiselle Pasgrandchose's intelligent countenance by an expression of inward contentment due to her having received yet a third egg—a modest egg—an egg no bigger than the normal product of the hen, but which on being cracked was found to enshrine five notes of the Bank of France for a thousand francs each, prettily folded, cocked-hat fashion, and tied up with pink ribbon. Ah, halcyon time! And what a carnival the rogues and the roguesses had "*sub Julio; nel tempo dei falsi e bugiardi!*"

Keener eyes than mine espied gem-adorned Easter Eggs in the great jewellers' shops of Paris this morning; but my quest was for the picturesque eggs, the toy eggs, the artistic eggs, and in particular the downright and outrageously comical eggs. In every one of these departments my researches were amply rewarded by results. I may just hint once for all that not in any single instance, in the scores of toy and confectionery shops into the windows of which I peered, did I find the slightest emblematic association of the Easter Egg with the memories of the Paschal Season. The Parisians borrowed these quaint things from the Russians, who attach to them a deeply religious significance; but the lively Gaul, in naturalising his *Oeufs de*

Pâques on the boulevards, at once eliminated from them the slightest elements of superstition. They were to him only so many bagatelles, on the confection of which much taste and skill might be lavished, and which might be vended at a highly remunerative price.

We need not be too shocked with the liveliness of the Gaul in dissociating Easter Eggs from Eastertide thoughts. It needs the erudition of all our Folk-Lore Societies, all our contributors to *Notes and Queries*, all our Thomas and Baring-Goulds, to keep our own English memories green touching the meaning of many of our own emblems and observances. Hot-cross buns explain themselves to the meanest comprehension. But how about the bean in the Twelfth-cake? How about the goose at Michaelmas (which has no more to do with Queen Elizabeth and the defeat of the Spanish Armada than with Queen Anne and the battle of Blenheim)? How about Santa Claus, who comes down the chimney on New Year's-eve, and fills the shoes of the good children with toys and goodies, and the shoes of the naughty ones with birch-broom? How about Hallowe'en? Does one Scot in ten thousand know the real meaning of Hallowe'en? Does anybody know it, save perhaps the lineal descendant of the last Druid, if such a man there be? The world is growing very old; and the Sphinx, by times, is puzzled to find a solution for her own riddles. It was such a very long time ago that she propounded them. We must take the Easter Eggs for what they are worth, from two francs fifty upwards. Some archæologists maintain that the gift-egg has nothing whatever to do with Easter, and that it is only a survival of the Roman *sportula*, or little basket full of eggs, poultry, and other provisions, which the Roman patricians used to give away to their clients. In process of time the present in kind was commuted for a small money payment, whence the very ancient French proverb—I find it quoted by a Norman judge in one of the Year Books of Edward I.—“*Vous voulez et l'œuf et la maille*”—You want the egg and the halfpenny too. Julian the Apostate, distributing *sportulæ* full of eggs at the Palais des Thermes, would make an interesting and attractive historical picture.

The Maison Boissier on the Boulevard des

Italiens, the Maison Brie, the Maison Giroux on the Boulevard des Capucines, and the Maison Siraudin in the Rue de la Paix, to say nothing of the great toy-shop of *Les Enfants Sages* in the Passage Jouffroy, do not trouble themselves, I warrant you, about the conflict between Pagan and Christian symbolism, about the Folk-Lore Society, or about Julian the Apostate. “*Êtes-vous drôle?*” asked the proprietor of a café concert in the Champs Elysées of a youthful lady candidate for an engagement. The fair aspirant replied that she was young and good-looking; that she had a tolerable voice, plenty of long-tailed dresses, and a sufficiency of sham jewelry. “That has nothing whatever to do with it,” persisted the practical proprietor. “*Êtes-vous drôle?*” The young lady ventured to express the opinion that she had been found very droll indeed. “*Voilà mon affaire,*” cried the delighted proprietor, and he engaged the droll *chanteuse* at once. Excruciating drollery is conspicuous this year among the Easter Eggs. All the humours of the poultry-yard have been requisitioned



The proudly strutting and normally exasperated turkey-cock, the pugnacious bantam, the preternaturally wise-looking owl, all the pigeon tribe—ruffs, pouters, and almond tumblers—the grave and inoffensive goose, yea, even those storks and adjutant birds which Mr. Stacey Marks knows so well how to paint have been pressed into the egg service. The Rev. J. G. Wood has seemingly been specially commissioned to teach the French

shopkeepers the art of making birds'-nests. Now who can refrain from laughter at the spectacle of an owl playing on the flageolet, of a Dorking and a Cochin China in his plumed pantaloons and with spectacles on nose laboriously executing a duet for piano and violoncello, or of the lordly turkey-cock propelling a perambulator full of chickens just emerging from their shells?

The Maison Boissier, on its side, is great in peacocks; but these are less "droll" than artistically graceful, and, to my thinking, somewhat weird and mysterious. The egg is represented by the body of Juno's bird, with plumage of the most dazzling blue, and stuffed inside with sweetmeats. The tail—a real tail, mind—is gloriously displayed; but the head is that of a young lady of the highest style of wax-doll beauty, crowned with a coiffure of the loveliest auburn tresses, arranged with an art that Truefitt might envy and that Isadore could not surpass. But why a head as fair as Phryne's on the body of a peacock? Mystery. Why has the Old Serpent in Rafaele's picture of the *Temptation of Eve* got the head of a beautiful woman in an Oriental turban? Mystery again. These peacocks, which should be peahens, at the Maison Boissier began at last to frighten me. I came to look upon them as the sisters of the Stymphalides — birds gay of plumage, but ravenous of appetite and false of heart—birds that would fasten their talons in your quivering flesh and drive their sharp beaks right through your *porte-monnaie* and your cheque-book into your heart, and eat you up, body and bones, as the cassowary on the plains of Timbuctoo ate up the missionary, hymn-book and all. They only wanted sixty francs for one of these beauteous but ominous Easter-egg birds; but their Siren-like heads and iridescent tails filled me with a vague mistrust, and I would have none of them.

The terra-cotta eggs, on the other hand, were really most delightfully artistic productions, skilfully modelled, and decorated with charming bas-reliefs. There were eggs in faïence, or ornamental pottery, too, painted with all manner of quaint devices; and Easter Eggs of this kind may be said to be not only ornamental but useful. A piece of tastefully-painted pottery is a thing of beauty and a joy for ever. Precisely the same

remark will apply to the Easter Eggs in brilliantly-coloured and cunningly-worked crystal, shown at Dr. Salviati's dépôt of ornamental Venetian glass, in the Rue de la Paix. Dr. Salviati—who certainly should have been commissioned to make Cinderella's glass slipper, had that *chaussure* been of *verre* instead of *vair*, as Perrault really meant it to be—has ingeniously availed himself of the occasion of Eastertide to show the Parisians that glass eggs may be made of the most symmetrical form, and decorated with the very finest taste. I did not see any eggs in Byzantine mosaic in the Doctor's collection; but what he has done in moulded and cut glass he could surely accomplish in vitreous tesserae.

Passing from the genuinely artistic Easter Eggs, we enter a very large and important domain, in which the egg, although it forms the mainspring of the scheme, is substantially subordinate to another most conspicuous *article de Paris*, the Doll. Thousands of *poupées* have suddenly been converted into variations of Mr. Millais' fascinating picture of *New-laid Eggs*. Numbers of other well-known pictures have likewise been prettily parodied from the egg point of view. Mignon regrets the land of the *citron* and the myrtle no more. She holds a basket full of eggs, and is as happy as the bees in May. Greuze's disconsolate damsel has thrown away her *cruche cassée*, and, drying her tears, is full of smiles over a large egg. Gretchen sings the Spinning Wheel song, or pulls her Passion-

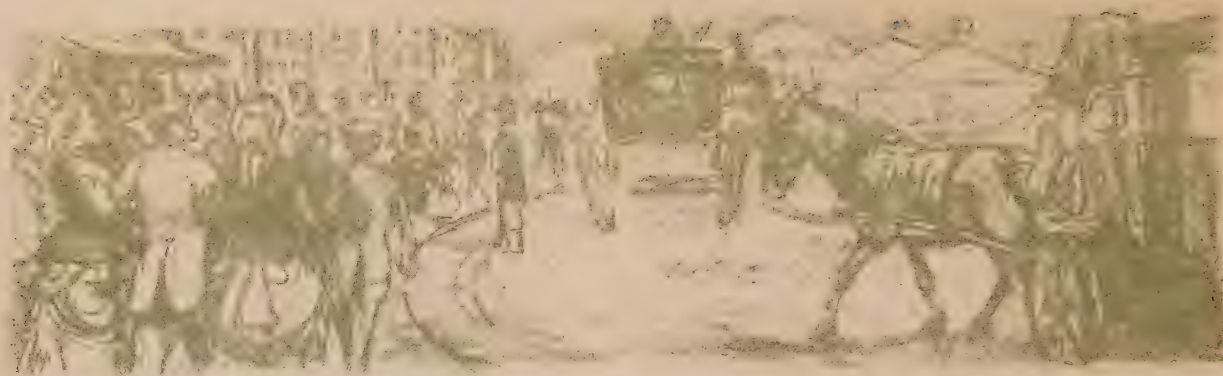


flower to pieces, snugly ensconced in the centre of an egg. Dolls dressed as the "Hanlon-Lees" — those wondrous contortionists — perform astounding feats of acrobatic agility on the surface of an egg. They remind me of the late Baron Nathan executing his inimitable *pas seul* among the eggs and the cups and saucers at Rosherville. Dear Rosherville! Charming abode of shrimps, chalk, and roses. The egg-eluding Baron has long since joined the Immortals; and I shall spend no more happy days at Rosherville. It is, nevertheless, tolerably pleasant here, among the eggs and the dolls. They are more edifying than the Parliamentary Debates. They are more amusing than Society. They do not expect to be amused. They amuse you.

Wheaten and oaten straw, artificial flowers and particoloured ribbons, play a very prominent part in the adornment of the eggs, which themselves are sometimes dyed in various colours or gilt. Going down to the great toy-shops of the Rue Vivienne, the Rue St. Honoré, and especially the 'Enfants Sages' in the Passage

Jouffroy, I found the Easter Egg losing its luxurious, losing its decorative, but retaining a recreative, and asserting a practical, character. What do you think of an egg containing a complete *batterie de cuisine*, pots and pans, *fourneau économique*, and all? An egg holding a complete *mobilier* for a doll, chairs, tables, sofas, cabinets, looking glasses, bed and bedding, likewise attracted much attention in the *Enfants Sages*, as did also an egg which served as a receptacle for a complete parlour photographic apparatus; an egg full of gymnastic appliances; and an egg which, on being opened, disclosed a baby doll in her cradle. I did not see any eggs that were full of books, or slates, or maps, or pretty little tiny educational kickshaws of that sort; indeed, I scarcely think that Easter Eggs of that nature would be highly popular among the joyous components of the Deluge of Boys and Girls, who will speedily overrun the Boulevards and the passages of Paris, and, until Eastertide be over, carry all before them.





GINGERBREAD FAIR

April 16



should have very much liked Professor Henry Morley to have been present with me at the *Foire au Pain d'Épices*—the great Gingerbread Fair—which was opened in the presence of an enormous concourse of sightseers on Easter Monday, and which will enjoy an existence of three whole weeks. The learned author of *The Annals of Bartholomew Fair* might have discovered many points of contact, in the way of humours and characteristics, between the existing gingerbread festival at the Barrière du Trône and the extinct saturnalia of Old Smithfield. One cannot carry all the scenes and characters in Ben Jonson's wonderful comedy *verbatim et literatim* in one's head; else might I institute a tolerably close parallel between the phenomena and the personages so powerfully portrayed in Bartholomew Fair and the prodigies and people visible among the booths at the *rond point* of the Barrier and in the Cours de Vincennes. Certain I am, however, that Lanthorn Leatherhead was at the *Foire au Pain d'Épices* with his puppets; that Dame Ursula, if she were not selling roast pig and bottled ale, was dispensing *galette* piping hot; and that the Parisian fair was as full of gaping rustics, cynical cockneys, "roving blades," and downright sharpers and cut-purses, as was the "Bartlemy" of old.

The French friend with whom I took counsel prior to visiting the affair advised me to go thither in a strictly buttoned-up condition. Fairs and racecourses, he declared, "*fourmillaient de*

pick-pockets"; but he was good enough to add, by way of rider, that the great majority of "*ces messieurs*" were English thieves. The French have a curious habit of fathering their little weaknesses in the way of vice and immorality upon us. In the not-to-be-forgotten play of *L'Assommoir* at the Ambigu—I have the taste of it in my mouth still—one of the toppers at the colossal dram-shop incidentally mentions that in a "*gin-palasse*" in the Strand, London, he has seen a "*colivire*"—presumably a coal-heaver—swallow twelve glasses of brandy in succession. Now the traditional custom of the British "coaley" is, I apprehend, after consuming as many pints of beer as he can conveniently carry until the delivery of the next wagon-load, to "top-up with a drop of short." Twelve successive "drops of short" would be considered as an unpardonable breach of coal-heaving etiquette. Again, there has been for some months in prison, awaiting the result of a protracted criminal *instruction*, a horrible woman, to whom has been given the nickname of the "*Ogresse des Lilas*." This woman was in the habit of lying in wait for young mothers who had infants in their arms. The ogress would enter into conversation with the mothers, and on some cunning pretence or another obtain possession of the infants, with whom she incontinently disappeared. What did she do with them? I see it gravely stated in a Parisian paper of this morning that the "*Ogresse des Lilas*" had entered into a formal contract to supply an *Agence Anglaise* with so many babies a year.



A Fitting Climax - Rue de la Paix



Fine Feathers - Marche du Temple

The "English Agency" was, according to this well-informed authority, engaged in the "substitution" business, the "Law of Primogeniture existing in England rendering it imperatively necessary that patrician families should be provided *coûte que coûte* with a due number of heirs male. When Lucina was unpropitious, substitution remedied the shortcoming." This is almost as ingenious as Mr. Gilbert's fantastic notion of the pauper's baby "substituting" himself for the millionaire baby by a judicious change of cradles.

There are, however, two persons in Ben Jonson's drama who certainly were not to be found at the *Foire au Pain d'Épices*. These were Justice Overdo and Rabbi Zeal-o'-the Land Busy. It is a strange commentary on the radical difference between French and English manners to find an English dramatist in the reign of James I. denouncing the "enormities" of a popular metropolitan fair in almost exactly the same terms that magistrates and clergymen nowadays employ to denounce not only any attempts to revive our few suburban fairs, but likewise the provincial "mops, roasts, and stalties." Yet Bartlemy, so fiercely anathematised by Justice Overdo and Rabbi Busy more than two hundred and fifty years ago, lingered until the seventh or eighth year of the reign of Queen Victoria; and, although Greenwich Fair has been definitely abolished, I find the veteran Earl of Shaftesbury, so recently as last Monday, solemnly reproving the people who preferred "roaming up and down Greenwich Hill" to patronising Industrial Exhibitions. The truth would seem to be that from time immemorial the English people have been passionately fond of outdoor amusements; while their pastors and masters have been as passionately persistent in their endeavours to deprive them—always on the highly sustainable plea of decorum and morality—of any outdoor amusements whatsoever.

Precisely the contrary rule has, in all times, and under all governments, prevailed in France. Outdoor games, shows, and merrymakings have always been systematically sanctioned and encouraged by authority; and under the Restoration, when a feeble effort was made by the Government to suppress the popular suburban

balls, the attempt was met by the furious and famous diatribe of Paul-Louis Courier—assuredly no Radical writer—against the law which proposed "*d'empêcher les paysans de danser le dimanche*," and the prohibitory legislation was abandoned. I may just conclude this section of my subject by remarking that among my readers there may be some who may remember the fair in Hyde Park on the occasion of the coronation of her Majesty Queen Victoria, in June, 1838. The *Foire au Pain d'Épices* is quite as big and as crowded a fair as was the Victorian festival; but what an outburst of indignation might not we expect from Respectability were it proposed to celebrate the forty-first anniversary of her Majesty's coronation by a fair in Hyde Park, or on Primrose Hill, or even in Epping Forest! London is the most gigantic school in the world; but we cannot afford, somehow, to provide a real playground for "Our Boys." We want them to be "something ological," as Mrs. Gradgrind put it. We do not recognise the expediency of their playing the fool sometimes. Yet Society would think it very hard if charades and the cotillon were suppressed by Act of Parliament.

The Paris Gingerbread Fair has two distinct and rigidly-adhered-to sides—the side of Business and the side of Tomfoolery. Prepared for both, I chartered a victoria on Monday and went down to the Barrière du Trône. The fair, with its succursals, must be at least three miles long. The booths and the roundabouts, the swings and the circular railways, begin at the Place du Château d'Eau, possibly for the recreation of the soldiers quartered in the enormous barracks erected by the Emperor Napoleon III to defend that which his military advisers deemed to be one of the most important strategical points in Paris. Subsequent events, nevertheless, have shown that, when insurrection is on foot, any street in Paris is good enough to fight in. The mob are quite impartial, and they will give battle at Père la Chaise or at the Jardin des Plantes—on the Buttes Montmartre or on the Place du Panthéon, just as the humour seizes them or as the *mot d'ordre* is given. "Where are the barricades?" I asked a railway porter, on arriving in Paris on the 3rd of December, 1851. "*Un peu partout, monsieur*," was the can-

did reply. Every inch of the ground between the Château d'Eau and the rostral column of the Barrière du Trône has been at some time or

another a battle-field; but on Monday everything wore the most pacific and the most smiling of aspects.





IN THE RUE DE LA PAIX

April 18



Just as the faintest promise of fine weather is beginning to gild our long-darkened horizon—it hailed yesterday and it may snow to-morrow, but to-day the sun shines so brilliantly that you almost forget the cutting east wind—the sorrowful fact confronts the would-be merry-maker that the Easter holidays are virtually over. Few and far between are the apparitions in the streets of small boys clad in the uniforms of the various Parisian colleges, which I hesitate to call by their old names of Louis le Grand, Charlemagne, Bourbon, and so forth, lest, under the newest Republican *régime*, these once familiar designations have been changed for more democratic titles. The Municipal Council, for instance, are playing a game of confusion worse confounded with the names of some of the best known thoroughfares in the French metropolis. A clean sweep has been made of all appellations recalling directly or indirectly the *fasti* of the First or of the Second Empire. The Rue St. Arnaud is to be re-christened the Rue Lincoln; the Rue Billault is to become the Rue Charron; and the Rue de Morny the Rue Pierre Charron. Poor Marshal Magnan is disestablished, and must give way to one Beaurépaire; the Avenues Joséphine, du Roi de Rome, and de la Reine Hortense are to be respectively

re-dubbed the Avenues Marceau, Kléber, and Hoche; the Quai Napoléon is to be merged in the Quai aux Fleurs; the Rue Marie Louise will henceforth be known as the Rue Viète—who was Viète?—the Rue Cambacérès is to become the Rue de Coulmiers; and the Rue Bonaparte the Rue Guttentburg. It would have been more ironically appropriate to call this last-named thoroughfare the Rue Palm, in memory of the bookseller whom the First Napoleon caused to be shot for publishing a pamphlet on “The Profound Degradation of Germany.” Unkindest cut of all, the Boulevard Haussmann—in itself a wonderfully characteristic type of Haussmannisation—is to take henceforth the cognisance of the Boulevard Étienne Marcel.

It is not quite decided whether the Municipal Council are to have their way in this contemplated orgy of street nomenclature; but just try to realise the idea of a Radical majority of the Metropolitan Board of Works metamorphosing Regent Street into Odger Street, and Brunswick Square into Feargus O'Connor Gardens, Hyde Park into Reformers' Tree Park, and St. James's Street into Club Row! I observe that M. Roy de St. Arnaud, in a letter to the newspapers, has indignantly protested against the threatened outrage to the memory of his distinguished father, whose bravery at the Battle of the Alma, and whose death at the post of honour, might

at least have saved his name from insult. But "high falutin" Democracy is just now in the ascendant, and will not listen to reason. I should not be in the least surprised to hear that there were a Collège Marat, a Collège Carrier, and a Collège Tom Paine, in lieu of the Collège Louis le Grand, the Collège Charlemagne, and the Collège Bourbon of my youth; that serious thoughts were entertained of converting the Boulevard des Capucines into the Boulevard des Bonnets Rouges, and the Rue Royale into the Rue de l'Extrême Gauche. I am not quite certain that it is not already, in strict legality, the Rue Nationale. I know that legally the Palais Royal is the Palais National; but I fancy that one Parisian in ten thousand calls it by its legal name. Ere long irreverent Democracy may even essay to tamper with the time-honoured name of the Rue de la Paix.

The poor dear old street—to me it is still, in many respects, the handsomest in Paris—has already been knocked about, physically, in a lamentable manner. Its summit was ruthlessly lopped away in a diagonal direction when this particular district was architecturally cut to pieces for the due alinement of the Avenue de l'Opéra; and for many months its vista was bereaved of the incomparably fine terminus of the columns of the Place Vendôme. The Pillar of Triumph once more raises its brazen head, but not all the Republic's architects, nor all its workmen, will be able to restore the shaved-off top of the Rue de la Paix. I can only venture to hope that they will leave its name alone. The French, when they set about their favourite task of effacement and obliteration, are apt to display an uncomfortable keenness of memory. The "Peace," from which the Rue de la Paix derives its title, was one not by any means redounding to the honour and glory of France. It was one, indeed, as humiliating to Gallic vanity, and as onerous to Gallic interests, as that peace with Germany in 1871, which deprived France of Alsace and Lorraine, and mulcted her of five milliards of francs. The thoroughfare at present called the Rue de la Paix was constructed under the First Napoleon, in 1807, through a portion of the gardens of the dis-established Convent of the Capucines, to serve as a new and stately

approach to the Place Vendôme. For seven years the new street went by the name of the Rue Napoléon; but in 1814, at the restoration of the Bourbons, and in memory of the Treaty of Peace, in which the Allied Powers imposed pretty much what terms they liked on conquered France, the Rue Napoléon became the Rue de la Paix. It has retained that name for sixty-five years. But, suppose it suddenly occurred to some violently Radical Municipal Councillor that a street named after the Peace of 1814 must be associated, in a manner ignominious to France, with Nesselrode and Metternich, with Castlereagh and Barclay de Tolly, with Blücher and Platoff, with Schwartzberg and "Vilainton;" under these circumstances one might tremble for the future of the Rue de la Paix. One might almost be troubled with ominous misgivings that it would ere long be authoritatively designated the Rue Blanqui. It certainly contains a sufficient number of chemists' and druggists' shops to warrant it being called the Rue Raspail.

Wandering there this morning, I could not help accepting its aspect as most convincing evidence of the Easter holidays being at an end. I have always looked on the Rue de la Paix as preëminently the most English street in Paris; and of that fact the humorous French journalist was well aware when he informed his readers that there was at least one shop in the Rue de la Paix in the window of which appeared the inscription "*Ici on parle Français.*" Elsewhere the English language was predominant. There are great numbers of our countrymen and countrywomen to be found in the Rue St. Honoré, but not further east than the Church of St. Roch, and the Rue du Faubourg St. Honoré. There is a permanent English colony, wealthy, refined, and aristocratic, in the breezy quarter of the Champs Élysées, and in the outskirts of the Boulevard de Courcelles and the Parc Monceaux. British nationality, too, makes a very conspicuous appearance on the great line of boulevards proper, from the Madeleine to the Rue Vivienne. Galignani's reading-room, Meurice's and other Anglo-French hotels, and in particular the *Grands Magasins du Louvre*, bring plenty of English ladies and gentlemen into the Rue de Rivoli; while the financial establishment of Mr. John Arthur, politest and most obliging of

bankers and house-agents, brings a continuous concourse of English and American visitors to the Rue Castiglione. Finally, you shall scarcely pass through the galleries of the Palais Royal at any hour of the day or evening, or at any season of the year, without lighting upon some unmistakably English groups intently staring at the cheap jewelry and the nicknacks. But, in the face of all this, I maintain the Rue de la Paix to be unsurpassed as a resort for my compatriots in Paris. In the other localities which I have named they only constitute a sprinkling among the pedestrians. They are absorbed in the great throng of *flâneurs* to the manner born, and have to take their chance with the native loungers; but in the Rue de la Paix they well-nigh monopolise the *trottoir*, and fill the first row, so to speak, in the stalls among the starers in at the shop-windows. An admiring group will usually be seen opposite the *étalage* of Messrs. Leuchars & Son, in deep contemplation of the gold and silver mounted dressing-cases, eclipsing the famous one of Colonel Rawdon Crawley, the despatch-boxes in shagreen and morocco, the inlaid jewel-caskets in ebony and Coromandel Wood, the elaborately ornamented glove-boxes and blotting books, the Japanese *étuis*, the ivory and tortoiseshell purses and card cases, and the note and letter-paper adorned with those boldly-designed illuminated monograms which this firm were the first to introduce.

At night the Rue de la Paix is not by any means a crowded thoroughfare. Although it has numerous and comfortable hotels, it does not boast a single restaurant or café. By nine o'clock business is suspended at the great millinery and

dressmaking establishments which are carried on above the shops. Mesdames "Théodoric," "Clorinde," "Hermione," "Naomi," and so forth, whose lofty-ensigns, denoting their commerce in *robes, fleurs, dentelles, and trousseaux de mariage*, gleam in huge gilded letters from so many balconies, attract during the daytime a brilliant affluence of what simple-minded folk in England term "carriage-people." The great dames of the Noble Faubourg; the grand ladies of the Russian Colony, the Spanish Colony, the Brazilian Colony, the female *illustrations* of *La Haute Finance* and *La Haute Colonie Israélite*, would never dream of purchasing their *emplettes* at the *Magasins du Louvre* or at the *Bon Marché*, unless, indeed, they found the *conduits* of credit temporarily obstructed, and were anxious to make a little ready money go a very long way. Similarly, in London, when rank and fashion finds that it has gone a little too deep in the books of its credit-giving and long-suffering tradesmen, rank and fashion condescends to



patronise for a while the Coöperative Stores. But, as a rule, rank and fashion in Paris has its *fournisseurs* and *fournisseuses*; and, equally as a rule, these purveyors of the pomps and vanities of feminine attire do not keep open shop.

The salons and the ateliers of the "Théodorics," of the "Clorindes," the "Hermiones," the "Eudoxies," and the "Naomis," are in the first and second floors of houses in the Rue de la Paix or in the Place de l'Opéra — mysterious salons to which formal introduction is imperatively necessary, and where "tick" assumes proportions inscrutable to the vulgar. It is in the Rue de la Paix where the veritable Temple of

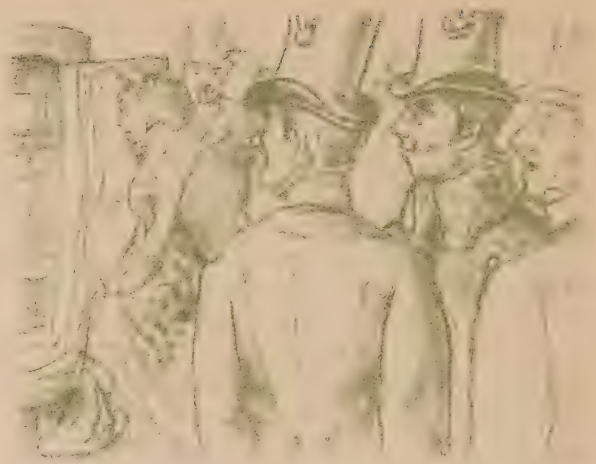


Fashion is situate, the *sanctum sanctorum* of feminine frivolity, over the more than Eleusinian mysteries of which the great Worth presides in person. The masculine eye has no more chance of penetrating its arcana than those of the worship of the Bona Dea; yet reports have from time to time reached me that the hierophant combines the suavity of a Granville, the diplomatic address of a Metternich, the firmness of a Wellington, and the prompt *coup d'oeil* of a Napoleon; and that before him princesses dis-crown themselves, duchesses tremble, countesses bow their aristocratic heads in mute acquies-



cence, and citizenesses of the Transatlantic Republic humbly abnegate that self-assertiveness which is one of their most prominent characteristics.

It is from ten to twelve in the morning—that is to say, between the hours of high mass and breakfast—and between three and five in the afternoon, between breakfast and the drive in the Bois, that the crowd of “carriage-people” in the Rue de la Paix is at its greatest. Then may you see the Duchesses and the Marchionesses, the Ambassadors and the American “millionairesses”—the last not nearly so numerous as of yore—descending from their sparkling equipages at the portals of the mansions where “Théodoric,” “Clorinde,” and the rest ply their mysteries; and there may you institute, if you please, any number of comparisons between the British flunky—calm, superb, impassable of mien, stately of figure, symmetrical of calf, undeniably stately but slightly supercilious *valet de pied*; a stalwart fellow enough of his inches, but clean-shaven, sallow, somewhat cadaverous of countenance, apt to look too rigid, as though he were



half-strangled in his high, stiff, white collar, and altogether wearing a half-military, half-clerical expression.

But, after five o'clock, the gay equipages, with their inmates and the *valets de pied*, disappear. The *demoiselles de magasin*, I take it, are dismissed about nine, and hurry away to their beloved boulevards; and, altogether, the Rue de la Paix would be all but deserted but for the English, whose appearance after the dinner-hour—say from eight to close upon ten p.m.—can in general be confidently reckoned upon. They have, to most intents and purposes, the Rue de la Paix to themselves. They have dined, say, at the Café de la Paix, or at the table d'hôte of the Grand Hôtel. Then, instead of repairing to a café or mingling with the *flâneurs* on the boulevards, as the native Parisians do, they tranquilly walk as far as the Rue Scribe, and have a good long stare at the diamonds and pearls at Otterbourg's, hard by the *porte-cochère* of the Jockey Club. This is a kind of *vorsmack* or relish for the banquet of jewelry which is to follow. Then they cross the enormous and, to pedestrians, somewhat perilous Place de l'Opéra, and passing the Bazar du Voyage, where French ingenuity has contrived to infuse the picturesque and the tasteful element into such prosaic things as port-manteaus, travelling-bags, indiarubber air-cushions, and waterproof sheets, they turn down the cruelly-truncated but still glorious Rue de la Paix. For them, and for them exclusively, so it would seem, are the great jewellers' and goldsmiths' shops kept open so very late. For them do the diamonds and the rubies, the emeralds and the pearls, the amethysts and topazes glisten

in their cases of crimson and purple and dark-blue velvet. If you peep into the shops you find them generally deserted, save by the shopkeeper and his assistants. But those gentlemen know their own business perfectly well. Make your mind thoroughly easy on that point. They would not keep their shops open so late and spend so much money upon gas if the protraction of their business-hours did not pay. Depend upon it there is a well-ascertained average of "*Milords Anglais*" who have dined well, of "*Fabricants millionnaires du Lancashire*," and "*Propriétaires de mines de houille là-bas*," and especially of British newly-married couples spending their honeymoon in Paris, who saunter up and down the Rue de la Paix between eight and ten at

night, and who stare at the jewelry until they become fascinated, even as birds are said to be by the basilisks, and so enter the glittering *magasins* and buy largely. I am afraid that during this actual Easter the presence of English people willing to be nocturnally fascinated in the Rue de la Paix has been considerably under the average, and that the enterprising jewellers have burned a large quantity of gas without any commensurate return in the way of custom. The weather has been so cold, so wet, and so generally miserable. But let the brave *bijoutiers* of the Rue de la Paix pluck up heart. Whitsuntide is coming. It is only to be hoped that another Christmas, in the way of frost and snow, will not come before Whitsuntide makes its appearance.





THE LITTLE RED MAN

April 21



astertide is over; but I have yet a very few days in Paris remaining to me, and there may be no harm in utilising one of them by taking note of a phenomenon of which I was recently the admiring witness. I have seen another Ghost. That circumstance may not be in itself so very strange after all. This city is as full of spectres as Prospero's isle was full of noises; and on some of the Apparitions of by-gone Paris I have already descanted. But this last Ghost was assuredly the weirdest, most grotesque, and yet most fearsome phantom that the eyes of my mind have beheld for a very long time. The last day of Easter Week was a gloriously fine one. It is pouring with rain, dismally, this instant Monday morning; but Saturday was all blue sky and golden sunshine—a real lapis-lazuli afternoon.

So, towards six in the evening, having done what I could—and that was but little—in the way of picking up odd bits of china at something less than famine prices, I crossed the Pont des Arts, and, passing through the postern of the Louvre, stood for a while in the great courtyard of the Carrousel. To the Square of the New Louvre, begun by Napoleon I, completed by Napoleon III — I wonder whether they have finished hacking all the crowned and laurel-encircled "N's" out of the carved work yet—I purposely turned my back. Those spruce façades, those brand-new statues, those trim iron railings with smartly gilt javelin-heads, had for the moment no attractions for me. I looked

ahead—mathematically straight — knowing that a rifle-bullet, fired from the spot on which I stood, should wing its way exactly through the centre of the opening of the arch of the Carrousel, through the central Pavilion of the burnt-out Tuileries, through the golden gates of the Tuileries gardens, through the avenue of the Champs Élysées, through the centre of the Rond Point, and through the middle of the Arch of Triumph of the Étoile. The alinement of every inch of these monuments has been measured. Everything has been *tiré au cordeau*; and the spectator sees before him a magnificently demonstrated geometrical problem, in lieu of a blurred, incoherent, and haphazard ruck of buildings, as one sees them in Trafalgar Square.

Looking thus right before, with the Étoile in the remote background, it was pleasant to find that, in the middle distance, the gap left in the gutted carcase of the palace built by Philibert Delorme for Catherine de' Medicis was partially atoned for. The Pavilion de l'Horloge was in ruins, but the Communards had at least spared the Arc du Carrousel. You know that stately copy of the Arch of Septimius Severus at Rome well. The Carrousel monument is somewhat too profusely oranamented with military trophies and paraphernalia of the First Empire. Still, the ensemble is undeniably grandiose. All kinds of ghosts hovered about it to my mind, but not the particular spectre that I am wishful to touch upon. For example, I descried the ghosts of four huge brazen horses harnessed to a Car of Victory. Very ancient steeds these—possibly more than twenty hundred years of age. Taken from Rome

to Byzantium by Constantine; brought from Constantinople to Venice; stolen by Napoleon from the Venetians, and set up here, in the Carrousel, as a sign and token of the Napoleonic glory for ever. These horses of brass had feet of clay. They remained on the summit of the Carrousel Arch scarce ten years. What ghost is this I see—a ghost square of form, round-headed, gray-haired, and with a wondrous look of kindly intelligence in the gray eyes and mobile mouth—a ghost leaning on a stick, as though slightly lame—a ghost in a blue frock-coat, plaid waistcoat, gray-kerseymere pantaloons, and hessian boots? He stands among a group of tattling and tittering British sight-seers, male and female, and peers curiously at the Arch, which is all surrounded with scaffolding and ladders, and gear of ropes and posts. Workmen are hurrying up and down the ladders; they are trying, seemingly, to detach those brazen horses from the Car of Victory, but for many a weary hour they tug and tug in vain.

Not only by the blonde children of Albion is the strange spectacle witnessed. Over against the group of English folks is a much larger gathering of Parisians, scowling, clenching their fists, muttering curses. Disbanded officers, fiercely whiskered, in long frock-coats and huge cocked hats; working men, pale with anger; women of the people, with difficulty kept from shrieking forth exhortations to the mob to rise in riot. They must needs be quiet; so they weep piteously, and gesticulate, and point derisively to the abhorred foreigners. They must needs be quiet, for out in front of the Arch, towards the Tuileries, is drawn up a battalion of Austrian infantry, white-coated, blue-legged, black-gaitered, bearskin-shakoed, stumpy men, somewhat pudding-faced of mien, but solid. They must needs be quiet, these much-moved Parisians, for in the rear of the Carrousel stand at ease a battalion of British Highlanders. The street gamins gather about them, eyeing their kilts and sporrans and their great sable-plumed bonnets, curiously. The women eye them with glances less ferocious than those which they cast on the detested Austrians, on the Cossacks who are hard by in the Place de la Concorde, and on the Prussians who are in the Place Vendôme. Donald and Sandy have not been long in France, but the people have already

a sneaking liking for them. They behave decently in their billets. They do not break up the best furniture in the poor man's home for fuel. They do not drink up his lamp-oil, nor eat his tallow candles. They do not steal his only clock. They share their abundant rations with the poor pinched folks on whom they are billeted. Donald is not above peeling the onions; and Sandy will rock the baby in the cradle while the housewife is away fetching a litre from the wine-shop, or buying a crust of white bread for the evening *pot au feu*. But how they tug and tug at those brazen horses!

An English lady is gallantly escorted by a British officer up the ladder, and stands for an instant simpering in the Car of Victory. It is evidently "the thing to do." The squarely-built gentleman in the blue coat, with the slight stoop and the short limp, points upwards with his stick. There are canny sergeants and corporals among the Highlanders who "ken" the gentleman in the blue coat well. They do not know him as "Paul writing to his kinsfolk," but a whisper runs through the ranks that Walter Scott is on the ground. Not until two hours afterwards, in the late twilight of July, does another North British gentleman, John Scott, editor of the *Albion*, sitting at his dinner at a restaurant near the Louvre, hear a tremendous clatter and rumbling in the street outside. He and the other guests rush to the door, to see the strangest of sights. Four mighty wains, each dragged by a string of powerful Percheron horses, drag four masses of something swathed in canvas and bands of hay. They are escorted by a squadron of Austrian Uhlans. Ah! the feet of clay, the feet of clay! Waterloo has been fought. The Vanquished Exile is on his way to his rock; the spoils of his glory are being given up to the Allies; and the Horses of St. Mark on their way back to their antique station in the loggia of the great Basilica at Venice. Not to their proper owners, for all that, yet awhile. The Austrians held those brazen steeds and the whole Dominio Veneto to boot for just forty-one years longer.

It was on a gray autumnal morning, in the year 1866, that, happening to be standing in St. Mark's Place, Venice, in front of the three great gonfalon-poles which aforetime bore the

banners of Venice, Cyprus, and the Morea, I noticed on the pavement of the Piazza certain spheroid bundles of bunting, connected by cords with flagstaves. It was not time to hoist them yet. Napoleon III's General Le Boeuf was signing a certain document at the Hôtel de Ville. Austria had sullenly yielded Venetia to France, and France was politely handing over the rare gift to the Podesta of Venice. The Baron di Alemann, for a long time Austrian Governor of the Queen of the Adriatic, had gone away quietly at early morn in a gunboat to Trieste. So the time wears on. By nine o'clock there are thirty thousand people in St. Mark's Place, agitated, trembling, panting with excitement. A cannon booms from Fort Haynau. There, the deed is done, the instrument is signed, the cession is complete. The bales of bunting take unto themselves wings, and, flying right up to the summit of the flag-staves, stream out in the three colours — the Cross of Savoy in the middle banner. While, with one throat, the thirty thousand Venetians are shouting their *Evviva!* another, and another, and another cannon boom from the Campo di Marzo. Then do more thousands, gathered in gondolas on each side of the Canal-azzo, or crowding every window of every house of its length, watch a procession of huge barges and lighters, slowly towed by tiny steam-tugs from the railway station towards the Molo. These barges and lighters are all alive with soldiers. They are clad in blue and green, and are sparkling with steel and silver. These barges bear the Carabinieri and the Bersaglieri of Victor Emmanuel, King of Italy; and the Horses of St. Mark have come to their right owners at last.

I could not help conjuring up this scene as I visited the Triumphal Arch of the Carrousel. The attic story of the structure is still surmounted by some kind of equestrian and vehicular allegory in bronzes; but I am very short-sighted, and have not the least idea of what the allegory may mean. But memory has the longest of sights. Memory proceeded to invoke the phantoms of yet two other horses with which their cavaliers were wont to embellish the precincts of the Carrousel Arch during the Second Empire. These were two stalwart Cent Gardes who, fully armed and equipped, were wont to

mount guard here. They had tall sentry-boxes into which they might back their steeds; for their uniforms were dreadfully expensive, and a few raindrops might have made fearful havoc with their silvery casques and flowing plumes, their sky-blue tunics and pink facings, their bright steel cuirasses and golden epaulettes and *aiguillettes*, their spotless gauntlets and buckskins, their lustrous jack-boots and embroidered ham-mercloths. What beauteous hoofs — of clay — their coal-black steeds had! They are clean gone — lock, stock and barrel; long sword, saddle, bridle, and all. Those old battered brass dummies on St. Mark's Place have shown in the long run more vitality and "staying power" than the real flesh-and-blood horses and men that for 18 years flanked the posterns of the Carrousel.

I was going away, for I cannot bear to gaze long on the blackened skeleton of the Tuileries, when, perched on the top of the ambiguous bronze allegory, I thought that I perceived something that was scarlet. Nearer and nearer did I



approach, rubbing my eyes. The eyes of my mind, *bien entendu*. Yes, there was something clad in red, and it was humpbacked; it had a cloven foot, and only one eye. From its misshapen mouth a prodigious tongue lolled forth, and it grinned a most infernal grin. Who could this be? Le Sage's *Diable Boiteux*? No; the elf seemed even more malicious than the Devil on Two Sticks, so wondrously etched by Tony Johannot. He had a kind of mandolin with him, too, this sanguinolent ghost; and ever and anon, in a raucous strident voice, he sang the songs of divers epochs. The year was Seventeen Hundred

and Ninety-two; he had divested himself of his scarlet breeches; he had donned a Phrygian Cap of Liberty, with an enormous tricoloured cockade; and the demoniacal dwarf was screeching *La Marseillaise*. "*Saints du Paradis, priez pour Charles Dix!*" It was the year Seventeen Hundred and Ninety-three, and the dwarf had powder in his hair, and was clad in a sea-green coat, and wore ribbons at his knees and striped stockings. He was chanting the "*Hymne à l'Être Suprême*," and swore by the incorruptible Robespierre. "*Saints du Paradis, priez pour Charles Dix!*" Again transformed, in the tarnished court suit of the Marquis de Carabas, with a huge three-cornered hat on his head and an inordinate pigtail, the monstrous little portent bellowed that the year was Eighteen Hundred and Fifteen, that Napoleon was overthrown, that the Bourbons had come back, and that the only songs to sing were *Vive Henri Quatre* and *La Belle Gabrielle*. "*Saints du Paradis, priez pour Charles Dix!*" That pious invocation he was intoning on the Twenty-sixth of July—so he said—Eighteen Hundred and Thirty. Then his wretched little limbs were veiled in a long black cassock, and he wore a gigantic shovel-hat, like that of Don Basilio in the opera.

I know him now—the familiar fiend. I hurried out of the courtyard of the Carrousel, and so into the Rue de Rivoli, and into the public way which now crosses the gardens of the Tuileries. There he was, at every dismantled window in the blackened façade of the burnt-out palace. There he was, tearing the Second Abdication of Napoleon with his paws, or rolling up into the same ball the Abdication of Charles X and that of Louis Philippe. *La Parisienne*, *Le Chant du Départ*, and *Mourir pour la Patrie*, *Partant*

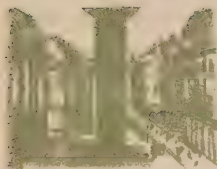
pour la Syrie, *the Marseillaise*,—all these, in incoherent sequence, streamed from his throat. When he seemed to be quavering one ditty he broke into the strophes of another. Who but he? But who was he—this crimson ghost? Evidently *Le Petit Homme Rouge* — the Little Red Man of the Tuileries, the familiar demon of the place, the *eidolon* of the First Napoleon, to whom it is said he appeared in Egypt, on the eve of the Battle of the Pyramids, muttering the word "Moscow." He was seen again, according to the testimony of a grenadier of unimpeachable veracity, coming out of the Emperor's tent on the night before the Battle of Austerlitz. When challenged and bidden to give the countersign, he screamed "St. Helena," and vanished with an unmelodious twang. I wonder if anybody saw him on the night before Sedan. I am sure that I saw the Little Red Man—in my mind's eye—last Saturday afternoon; for his last performance, after lighting his pipe with the *Journal Officiel de la Commune*, was to produce an enormous carboy of petroleum, and, crooning "*Liberté, Égalité, Fraternité*" the while, proceed to pour the contents over the site of the Salle des Marchaux, of the cabinet of Napoleon III and of the boudoir of the Empress Eugénie. Then he disappeared; and then I remembered having purchased, that very morning, a neat little two-volume octavo edition of the Songs of P. J. de Béranger, and re-read, for the fiftieth time perhaps, the fascinating chanson of *Le Petit Homme Rouge*. The Little Red Man may turn up again some day, and in a very unexpected manner, even after the blackened shell of the Palace of the Tuileries wholly disappears from the face of the earth.





THE AVENUE DE L'OPÉRA

April 26



It is very true," said a French friend to me the other day, "that the vista of the Avenue de l'Opéra is terminated, and very finely terminated, by M. Garnier's superb theatre; but an avenue is, unlike Mirabeau's celebrated definition of a miracle, a stick with two ends; and at the other extremity of the Avenue de l'Opéra is the Place du Palais Royal. Why should it not be called the Avenue du Palais Royal?" My friend went on to suggest a *mezzo termine*, to the effect that the wonderful thoroughfare, on the aspect of which I am about to touch, should be entitled La Rue des Grandes Consolations. "We have lost much," he remarked, "owing to the rigours of the siege and the madness and wickedness of the Commune. The Palace of St. Cloud is gone. So is the Hôtel de Ville. So are the Tuileries, the Ministry of Finance, the Hôtel of the Legion of Honour; and the barracks of the Quai d'Orsay, of Prince Eugène, and the Rue Mouffetard were wholly or partially destroyed. The Théâtre Lyrique, the Port St. Martin, and the Délassements Comiques were burnt. The Library of the Louvre, with its eighty thousand volumes, was incinerated by those emulators of the Caliph Omar. Some half a dozen Mairies, two or three railway termini, and about two hundred private houses were

more or less knocked to pieces by the shells of the Versaillais, or *sautées au pétrole* by the *Communards*. But to atone, to compensate for all this, we have the Avenue de l'Opéra. Let us call it, then, the Rue des Grandes Consolations. '*Paris est mort; vive Paris!*' The Avenue de l'Opéra is so splendid and so wealthy that I am almost inclined to find yet another name for it—the Boulevard de la Revanche.' Look upon those stately mansions, those piles of rich merchandise and dazzling jewelry, and the vision of the Five Millions of Indemnity flies away like an ugly nightmare at the approach of morn."

I look, myself, on the Avenue de l'Opéra as one of the three most remarkable achievements of essentially modern architectural construction. The other two are the Holborn Viaduct and the Galleria Vittorio Emanuele at Milan. In one respect the Avenue has some affinity to the greatest metropolitan improvement of the early years of this century, Regent Street. This last-named and noble thoroughfare was, as the Avenue is, a street with a definite and dominant idea. "I will pierce," said, in effect, Nash to the Prince Regent, "right through one of the most crowded and most squalid districts in London a splendid and spacious street, directly connecting the Royal Park of Marylebone with your Royal Highness's palace at Carlton House." The connection between the Regent's Park and the

site of Carlton House at the Duke of York's Column was successfully carried out; but, unhappily, in England we are in the habit of doing things architectural by halves. Nash was permitted to demolish the ugly and grimy old thoroughfare known as Great Swallow Street, but he was compelled to leave behind the northern side of his magnificent street an unsavoury fringe of still existing and scarcely improvable slums. Had he been allowed, as he wished to, to pull down Carnaby Street and Silver Street, and throw open Golden Square into Regent Street, and, especially, had the houses which he built in Regent Street been six instead of four storeys high, his triumph would have been complete. In the Avenue de l'Opéra the constructor's motto has been throughout, *Vestigia nulla retrorsum*. No slums impinge on the splendour of the new street. It has no *coulisses* of dirt and squalor. Every street, to the smallest, which debouches into it has been swept and garnished; and, with one curious exception, its alignment is perfect. This exception is the antique mansion which stands so oddly "on a bias," and which is actually No. 37 in the Avenue de l'Opéra. This old house encroaches so defiantly on the foot-pavement, that people have been inquisitive to know why it was not "expropriated" at the bidding of the Prefect of the Seine and the Municipality of Paris; but there have been, it seems, good reasons for temporarily tolerating its existence. The leases of the different "locations" in the mansion had yet some years to run when the line of the Avenue was decided upon; and the sum which would have been demanded to indemnify the lease-holders was too enormous to be paid by the already overtaxed city. On the expiry of the leases the old house will be pulled down, and replaced by edifices in structural harmony with the rest of the Avenue.

And yet this old house is somewhat of an historical monument; and its proximate disappearance may be mourned by a few antiquaries. It is part of an old hotel built in the latter years of the seventeenth century. The entrance is in the Rue Neuve des Petits Champs, and the staircase of wrought iron, the cornices full of mouldings, of nymphs and dolphins in plaster, heightened by tarnished gilding, and the carved ceilings, are very curious to look upon. In one of the apart-

ments of the first floor there are panels of the epoch of Louis XIV, decorated with allegories of Painting, Sculpture, Architecture, and Music; and in many of the rooms the chimney-pieces and the embrasures of the windows are very quaintly embellished. This doomed old house has yet another claim to remembrance. In a suite of very modest apartments on the ground floor lived for a long number of years the illustrious French advocate Berryer, the defender of Marshal Ney, the defender of Louis Napoleon, the friend of Mackintosh and Brougham. In his little *cabinet de travail* the great advocate was waited upon one day by a poor woman whose case he had pleaded without a fee. He had won her suit for her—it was but a matter of a few hundred francs—and she came to insist that he should accept payment for his services, but *he*



insisted that he would take naught. She came again, and brought him a little inkstand of white earthenware with a leaden top. That gift he kept, and he used the inkstand constantly until his death, 30 years afterwards. His cook lived with him for 28 years. He left her a handsome annuity; and the old lady is still alive, and resides in the house from which she must soon perforce remove. She is, as it happens, a *cordon bleu*, and after the death of the master whom she had served so faithfully many most enticing offers were made to her to accept fresh situations. But she repelled them all with a disdainful toss of the head. "I have been the cook of Monsieur Berryer," she said. "*En voilà assez.*" One thinks of the widowed Sarah Jennings scornfully reminding the suitor for her hand that it had once belonged to John Churchill, Duke of Marlborough.

There is no use in wailing over Berryer's house. It must go. Northumberland House was interesting, historically and socially, from many points of view; but it had to go nevertheless. The colossal hotel which is rising on its site belongs, like the "Splendide Hôtel" in the Avenue de l'Opéra, to the Newest of the New, to the utterly Modern Time. History is all before it; and I suppose that it is the destiny of all big houses to acquire a history of their own after a certain lapse of time. The famous people may be yet unborn, the mighty events may be yet scarcely at the beginning of the warp and woof on the looms of Time, that are to make the Avenue de l'Opéra illustrious. Meanwhile, it presents to me a great deal of that which is curious, and not a little of that which is really wonderful. It is not my business to know anything about political economy; and this is not the place to raise a discussion concerning Free-trade as against Protection, and especially against what is called "Reciprocity;" but, as it happens, I am a very old Parisian. My knowledge of Lutetia and of the manners and customs of her people, dates from the eighth year of King Louis Philippe. I can remember very well that then and for many years afterwards nearly the only places in Paris where one could procure English groceries, wines, and spirits was at Cuvillier's, in the Rue de la Paix; that English penknives, scissors, and table-cutlery were almost unattainable things; that English crockeryware was as scarce in Paris as old Dresden china is scarce there now; that English hosiery and linendrapery were fearfully costly and rarely to be met with. No doubt that English manufacturers of iron and calicoes have some reason on their side in dolefully complaining of their diminishing trade with foreigners—the foreigners to whom International Exhibitions have taught so much these five-and-twenty years past cannot surely be expected to sit idle, twiddling their thumbs, and contemplating photographs of British machinery—but, on the other hand, I look around me, and I see this wondrous Avenue de l'Opéra absolutely overflowing with British commodities.

The French are sending us an abundance of exquisitely beautiful art bronzes, painted plaques, and the multifarious trifles known as *articles de Paris*. They inundate us with clarets,

champagnes, and brandy; but, on the other hand, we are commercially "down on them" with cateracts of plain and fancy biscuits, pickles, sauces, condiments, and even with preserved fruits, jams, and jellies. They are eating our chocolate, and particularly our cocoa. They are burning our candles, our night-lights, and our oils and spirits for lamps; we send them enormous quantities of starch and mustard, farinaceous food, soap, and other accessories of the toilette. They have now come to the complexion of swallowing English pills.

As for beverages, *les boissons anglaises* have become frankly accepted articles of consumption. The quantity of English beer drunk by the Parisians is simply prodigious. Bottled stout is in steadily-increasing demand; but the consumption of porter is largely exceeded by that of the pale ales of Burton-on-Trent. Messrs. Allsopp & Sons, who were the first firm to consign pale ales to France, have seen their continental business increase almost tenfold since the Exhibition of 1867. They have now immense *dépôts* of pale ale in bottle at Vaugirard; another warehouse at Batignolles for consignments to the provinces; and a further storehouse in the Avenue Mac-Mahon, close to the Barrière de L'Étoile. There is scarcely a café in the Boulevards that does not hang out Allsopp's ensign; whereas, I can remember in my youth that a pint bottle of "Hodgson's East India Ale" at the Café de la Madeleine—the only establishment where the beverage was sold—cost four francs. At present, at many of the fixed-price restaurants, you are allowed to exchange the bottle of wine to which you are entitled for a quart of English bitter beer; and vast numbers of Frenchmen prefer what they facetiously term "le Champagne Anglais" to that very dubious vintage, restaurant *vin ordinaire*.

Thus, it is not only in the Avenue de l'Opéra that you are repeatedly struck by signs and tokens of the close intercourse which, within the last few years, has sprung up between two nations who used to hate each other—or to believe that they hated each other—so bitterly and to avoid each other so morosely not so many years ago. When I am dining at the Grand Café at the corner of the Rue Scribe I never fail to derive amusement from the contemplation,

through one of the immense plate-glass windows of the café, of the brilliantly gas-illuminated ensign of a hostelry and drapery establishment on the Boulevard opposite—"Old England." Thus runs the brilliant gas device. I scarcely think that my own countrymen and countrywomen resort there in overwhelming numbers. I fancy that the most numerous and the most remunerative patrons of "Old England" are the Parisians who wish to purchase English productions. I daresay that the enterprising hatter at the corner of the Avenue de l'Opéra and the Rue de la Paix, who proudly



announces himself as "*le chapelier du Derby et du High Life*," has as many French as English clients. I see every evening numbers of French as well as English gentlemen pressing round the kiosk of the civil and intelligent English women by the Café de la Paix, where you can obtain all kinds of English newspapers and periodicals. Throughout Paris, indeed, a general impression seems to have gained ground that England is not ten thousand miles off, and that its inhabitants are not a savage and sulky people, who are in the habit of selling their wives "*au Smitfield*," and committing suicide en masse so soon as the month of November comes round.

This impression is, to all appearances, exceptionally strong in the Avenue de l'Opéra. Where could there be a more significant proof of the commercial and social *entente cordiale* which has been established between the Briton and the Gaul than the recently-opened Coöp-

erative Stores, which are conspicuous among the glories of the Avenue—"The London and Foreign Coöperative Society," whose English "*siège social*" is in the Haymarket, London? You almost feel inclined to rub your eyes with astonishment at reading that announcement. The Coöperative display in the Avenue slightly reminds you of Mr. Whiteley's interminable procession of shops in Westbourne Grove, with this important exception, nevertheless, that the "dry goods" element is absent. For dry goods—articles of feminine costume and adornment on a gigantic scale—you must either go to the *Bon Marché* or to the *Grands Magasins du Louvre*. At the last-named emporium the purchaser of linen drapery, silk mercery, or haberdashery, beyond a certain amount is presented *par-dessus le marché* with a balloon. You shall hardly pass down a frequented thoroughfare in Paris—notably in the afternoon—without meeting children of all ages, *bonnes*, grown-up ladies, elderly gentlemen *décorés*, even gravely holding the strings which prevent these captive spheres of diaphanous caoutchouc from sailing away in the ambient air. They all bear the word "Louvre" printed upon them in big letters. To such commercial uses must all things come at last. It is the Advertisement, not Time, which in the end is *edax rerum*:

"Le pauvre en sa cabane, où le chaume le couvre,

Est sujet à ses lois,

Et la garde qui veille aux barrières du Louvre

N'en défend pas nos rois."

So sang one of the noblest of French poets. In modern time the "*garde qui veille aux barrières du Louvre*" is symbolised by the solemn *huissier* who guards the threshold of *les Grands Magasins*.

Eatables and drinkables are the staple and stock in the co-operative shops in the Avenue, the line of which threatens to stretch to the crack of doom. Groceries of all kinds; wines, spirits, and liqueurs; hams, sausages, and preserved provisions; beer and aerated waters; fish, poultry, and game; cheese and bacon; pickles and preserves; biscuits and macaroni; legions of

things of British and French provenance mingle here in amicable competition. Could such a gathering be possible if we went back to the old lines of Protection, and voted treaties of commerce to be mischievous innovations? Yes; they would be just possible, but with one important reservation. In the city of St. Petersburg, and on the Nevski Prospekt, there used to be, three-and-twenty years ago, a wonderful store-house of British commodities called the *Anglisky Magasin*. I do not know if the place be yet existent, since the last time that I was in Russia I was too much occupied with politics and the possibilities of getting down to Odessa, through snow-blocked roads, to trouble myself much about the inner manners of Petropolis. But the old *Anglisky Magasin* was a most curious place. You could get almost everything that was British there—except the *Edinburgh Review*, which, for what reason I know not, was under the ban of censorship. Still, Dent's chronometers, Mackintosh's patent knife-cleaners, patent medicines, Worcester sauce, bottled ales and stout, Stilton cheese, anchovy sauce, Reading biscuits, York hams, Wiltshire bacon, Welsh flannel, and, in fact, all the accessories to that which we call "comfort," were procurable at a moment's notice at the *Anglisky Magasin*. All this looks ostensibly like co-operation and free trade. But what was the reservation of which I spoke? Simply this, that everything of non-Russian origin was so abominably overweighted with custom duties as to be virtually unpurchasable by all save the wealthy classes. If you did not mind giving a rouble for a bottle of Guinness's Dublin stout, you might lay in as many dozen as you chose; otherwise you were fain to be content with *quas* or with Moscow *piva*.

Taking the Avenue de l'Opéra as a whole—palatial shops, enormous restaurants and cafés, electric lamps, and all—and comparing it with the adjacent and much-loved Rue de la Paix, I should qualify the last-named thoroughfare as a French street specially designed for the delight of English people, while the Avenue de l'Opéra is to most intents and purposes a street full of British things, meant to attract the admiration and patronage of French people. Cosmopolitan

customers, of course, frequent the magnificent Café Restaurant Foy—kept by the historic Bignon—and the Café Restaurant de Paris, which may be described as a phoenix risen from the ashes of the old Café de Paris, hard by Tortoni's, in the Boulevard; but the shops, as shops, seem commendably ambitious to persuade Frenchmen to buy English goods. The British "linoleum" invites Parisian notice and support. A grand "British art-gallery" offers to the inspection of Parisian amateurs a brilliant collection of pictures by the best known painters of the United Kingdom. Nor is America backward in announcing her adhesion to the cosmopolitan principles which seem dominant in the Avenue de l'Opéra. The *New York Herald* has here its Paris offices; and the famous New York jeweller and goldsmith, Tiffany, has established himself in the Avenue to maintain the high repute which he won in gaining the Grand Prix in the Universal Exhibition. In fine, perhaps, the most comprehensive thing to say about a thoroughfare to which I am now bidding farewell, and which these eyes may never look upon again, is that the Avenue de l'Opéra is less a characteristically Parisian street than a permanent universal exposition of art, industry, and alimentary substances. Only one little and sufficient curious circumstance remains to remind the observer that he is in Paris, and that the basis of the whole show is essentially French. Many of the houses are yet unfinished, or, at all events, the plaster of the ceilings and walls is not sufficiently dry to allow of the different flats being occupied by eligible tenants. Pending the completion of the process of desiccation, pending the arrival of more *marchandes de modes*, tailors, and curiosity dealers, many of the *rez-de-chaussées* are occupied by a rabble rout of *marchands forains*—pedlars of sham jewelry and glittering rubbish generally, cheap Jacks, and nostrum vendors—mountebanks and jugglers even. Late at night I have had a vague suspicion of the presence of Mr. Chopps the Dwarf; and in this peerless Avenue there have been current dark and distant rumours of an incarnation, at 25 centimes admission per head, of the Bearded Lady and the Spotted Girl.

THE END

...the holiday of
...to spend the rest of their
...the nearer home. Nor is this
...at when it is remembered
...the World's Show, amongst
...and admirable exhibits,
...and ingenuity have more
...own; and that whether
...satisfactory products of the
...red, or the vastly improved
...the mother country be taken
...and is fairly entitled to the
...against the nations who display
...French capital. In this way
...for some time at least, will
...er in the artistically designed
...Exhibition, will in all pro-
...remainder of the holiday they
...their own country, instead of
...ambitious throngs farther afield.
...vice will explore the beautiful
...ve them birth; while others
...shortness of purse, will find
...to wander beyond the sea. Yet
...opportunities of huge enjoy-
...er the tourist may find it
...s to rest in the pleasant
...land and bask in the sun
...her lovely lakes, or de-
...capsack on his back, and with
...stout stick as his friends, seek
...the beautiful valley of the
...the lovely champaign which,
...first and Sevenoaks, leads the
...all that inimitable country
...the delicious villas of Tun-
...lth of delight may readily be
...tically the loveliest of lands
...vice is almost unbounded; so
...eam and enterprise combined
...country within his reach. He
...h-giving breezes of Scarbo-
...Margate, and Westgate, or
...me under the shelter of the
...between Ventnor and Black-
...oast, which boasts such varied
...Dover, Folkestone, Brighton,
...outhsea respectively afford, is
...; he has but to choose. Or if
...inous scenery, North Wales,
...lyhead, is open to him, with
...of Conway and Carnarvon,
...nt scenery of the Llanberis
...too, he may, if he desire
...Llandudno sea resorts of no
...with the glorious food which
...iries and farmyards. Or he
...shire, and at Dawlish, Teign-
...outh take his ease, and drink
...one of the West. Should he

...Locke is left to seek its champions of Liberalism
...in the ranks of respectable local tradesmen, de-
...voted to Permissive-Billism, Disestablishment,
...pro-Russianism, and every other craze and
...crotchet that will most readily scare off sound
...Liberals into the Conservative ranks. In the
...City this species of dictation has less chance of
...success, and Mr. Goschen has only to announce
...his determination to offer himself on his own
...merits to insure its entire defeat.

It is understood that the Government have
...now under consideration the tenders which have
...been sent in conformably with a notice recently
...issued for the mail service to China and India.
...Hitherto the contract has been in the hands of
...the Peninsular and Oriental Company, but the
...subsisting arrangement expires in eighteen
...months, and in the new contract certain im-
...provements are contemplated, mainly on such
...points as increased speed, and reduced cost, of
...conveyance. On a matter of such importance
...the Treasury officials will doubtless exercise the
...greatest care and circumspection. The mercan-
...tile and social interests involved, though weighty
...enough, are comparatively insignificant beside
...the political bearings of the question, for since
...the complete collapse of those whom, for want of
...a better term, we may designate the "Perish
...India" fanatics, the significance of constant,
...rapid and secure means of intercourse between
...England and the Oriental half of her Empire has
...immeasurably increased under the press of mo-
...mentous responsibilities, deliberately under-
...taken. It is satisfactory to believe that this is
...thoroughly comprehended by the Government,
...and that in deciding as to the new contract they
...will be swayed by public considerations only.
...We hope it may be taken for granted that
...they will, at all events, not venture upon any
...experimental modes of dealing with the service.
...The Company which has hitherto held the con-
...tract can point to a long and most successful
...career, during which it has carried the mails
...with a regularity which, under all the circum-
...stances, and making every conceivable allow-
...ance, is really wonderful. A new comer, en-
...tering on the field without the same experi-
...ence, accumulated resources, and thoroughly
...ramified organisation, could not be expected to
...accomplish as much, whatever it might under-
...take, and in this case public interests would
...suffer. It is natural that the leaders of the
...mercantile world, whose appreciation of the
...subject takes a wider scope than the welfare of
...rival shipowners, should deprecate any arrange-
...ment which might have such a result, and thus
...we learn, without surprise, that they have already
...stirred in the matter. One of the most remark-
...able "round robins" perhaps ever witnessed in
...the City, signed by every firm and bank of emi-
...nence connected with the East, beginning with
...Messrs. Rothschild, and bearing such names as
...Sassoon, Hambro, Matheson, Ralli, and Dent,
...has been presented to the Postmaster-General on
...the subject of the new contract. The memo-
...rialists point out how smoothly the service

THE CITY WITHOUT

[FROM OUR SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT]

PARIS

Arriving at seven in the morning
...weary, at the Paris terminus of the
...Fer du Nord, we cooled our heels
...ordinary and intolerable half-hour
...driven by superior order from one
...to another, until it pleased the
...begin the usual farcical but irritat-
...tion of the passengers' luggage. The
...ance was not by any means the least
...cause it was a farce and a sham.
...very few things worth smuggling
...smugglers are careful to put their
...goods anywhere but in the boxes a-
...teaus which they know will be se-
...supposing that it were worth while
...custom-house officers, modern French
...happen to be a singularly unbribable
...they do not receive fees, they con-
...selves to be absolved from the neces-
...civil, so that everything goes as
...well, as the Inchcape Bell in a fog.

Dismissed from the unsatisfactory
...a fiscal organisation with nothing
...doing it most elaborately, and emerging
...courtyard of the terminus, I found
...nishment, that nearly the only vehicle
...area were a line of those well-remembered
...boxes on wheels, with seats *vis-à-vis*
...to have started in life with the
...becoming omnibuses, but, thinking
...have halted in a truncated condition
...shandrydians are drawn by a pair of
...seemingly reared for the purpose
...mats and broken Eau de Selz syphons
...senting in their osteological develop-
...worthy the attention of a Gamgee
...Sidney. The vehicles themselves are
...called "paniers à salade," from the
...manner in which while in motion
...shake up the "passengers'" bones. These
...these wretched carriages are, as a rule,
...to Parisian legends, either wealthy
...Normandy, who have come up to the
...in quest of the graceless nephews to
...intend to leave their fortunes to
...lunatics who are met at the station
...tendants of the asylums to which they
...consigned. The railway porters will
...place my baggage on the roof of a
...rickety palanquins on wheels, when
...observed that I should prefer a
...voiture!" cried one of the porters
...distending to the broadest of grins,
...by which colloquialism he gave me
...stand that I was demanding the

FIGHTING ON THE BOSNA. DEFEAT OF THE INSURGENTS.

[BY DAILY TELEGRAPH SPECIAL WIRE.]
[FROM OUR OWN CORRESPONDENT.]

VIENNA, THURSDAY NIGHT.

More fighting has taken place in Bosnia, though, according to the Austrian official account, it has been attended with very small loss. The following report, received at the War Office, from Maglaj, headquarters, of the 13th Army Corps, bears Tuesday's date, and must consequently have been somewhat delayed in transmission: "The main column began to march towards Maglaj yesterday at eight a.m., the rain coming down in torrents. The flank columns received orders to advance at five o'clock, so that they might reach Maglaj at the same time. The march was very fatiguing, the road being soaked, and the men having to walk through mud and water. To the north of Maglaj, being thickly wooded, the insurgent posts were fired from the trees. At half-past three in the afternoon, the advanced guard arrived before Pittel, commanding the column in accordance with his intention, the object of surrounding the town earlier, and had thrown the town into the midst of the insurgent forces. A great deal of the Bosna, where the fighting was a terrible commotion. When the insurgents attempted to retreat from Zepee they were attacked by the right flying column. A half-hour's combat followed, in which flags, a large quantity of ammunition, and provisions were captured. The insurgents were shot down in great numbers, and were found dead in the streets. A detachment of 20 men was sent to the Bosna, where they were all killed late in the evening, and the column was left exhausted. The state of the army all idea of a further advance. Philippovic would not send the column through the defile of Zepee. The column under fire was excellent." The mention of the discipline of the column was by certain regiments. The column lost one killed and three wounded. The 7th Reserve one killed and three wounded. The fatigue of the troops from the march, and their indifferent condition, owing to the bad roads was only expected at

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